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E. F. Beadle,  
William Adams,  
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"Then heed my warning. Farewell!"

## THE PHANTOM SPY; OR, The Pilot of the Prairie.

BY BUFFALO BILL (HON. WILLIAM F. CODY),  
Author of "Deadly Eye," "The Prairie Rover," "Kansas King," etc., etc., etc.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE PHANTOM SPY.

"Devils alive! 'Is the man mad?"  
"I guess not; Prairie Pilot ain't no man to go mad; he sees somethin' as he's goin' to run down."  
"You bet! The Pilot's on a trail; but, what in tarnation is it?"  
As the third speaker spoke, there suddenly dashed out of the shadow of the timber into the broad moonlight, a horseman, who, with a deep-toned "hoop-la!" urged his steed into a full run out upon the rolling prairie, which spread for miles in his front.  
The three speakers had been seated around a camp-fire, in the shelter of a *motte*, or "timber island," far out on the Western plains.  
Their comrade, who had suddenly caused them to spring to their feet, and give vent to the conversation which opens this chapter, had been pacing to and fro in moody silence, a few yards from the fire, like a sentinel on guard, and at every turn in his walk he would hesitate momentarily, and glance far out over the moonlit prairie, as if on the alert for approaching danger.  
Suddenly, with a half-cry, as though of alarm, he had bounded toward where stood his steed, ready saddled, and the next moment, without a word to his companions, had shot forth upon the prairie like an arrow from the bow.  
"Ho, fellows! better git onto yer pins, for there's somethin' in the wind when yer see Prairie Pilot strike a trail like that," cried Yankee Sam, who, with his two companions, Bravo Bob and Scalp-lock Dave, had been quietly smoking around the camp-fire, and telling stories of desperate adventure they had known in their wild and reckless lives.  
At the call of Yankee Sam a score of men sprung to their feet and grasped their fire-arms, and instantly the encampment was a scene of excitement.

"Well, I'm after the Pilot, for he shan't play a lone hand if there's any danger ahead," and Bravo Bob started for his horse, when a loud cry from Scalp-lock Dave caused him to come to a sudden halt.  
"Holy Halifax! look a-yonder!"  
Every eye was turned out upon the prairie, and like one voice a dozen exclaimed:  
"The Phantom Spy!"  
Far out upon the prairie, and plainly visible in the moonlight, was what appeared to be a specter horse and rider, for the steed was as white as snow, and with a long flowing mane and tail.  
The rider on his back was dressed in the loose robe of a woman, for it fluttered only upon one side of the animal, as he sped along swiftly over the prairie.  
A long, white veil floated far out behind, and apparently encircled the rider's head like a turban, while motionless in the saddle, if saddle there was on the horse, she seemed to urge her steed on by a mere exertion of her will.  
Behind the phantom-looking horse and rider, and some hundred lengths away, rode the man whom his comrades called Prairie Pilot, and who had so suddenly dashed from the timber.  
That he was urging his horse to the utmost, was evident; and, though mounted upon the swiftest steed on the plains, that he was not gaining upon the phantom horse and rider was also evident.  
For an instant the pursuer and pursued were visible to every eye in the encampment; then they disappeared from view over a roll in the prairie.  
At their disappearance a sigh of relief seemed to come from scouts, traders and teamsters alike, for weird stories were told of the Phantom Spy, the white horse and rider, which, when once found on the trail of a wagon-train, was certain to bring bloodshed and ruin upon it before it reached the destination for which it was moving.  
All in that train had heard of the Phantom

Spy, and all felt a superstitious awe at the mere mention of the name.  
Only the night before, around the camp-fire, the weird steed and rider had been the subject of conversation, and Prairie Pilot, the chief guide and scout of the traders' train, wending its way toward the frontier settlements, had declared that he would follow the phantom to the bitter end.  
All knew Prairie Pilot to be one of the most daring scouts on the plains, and they felt that he would keep his word if he went to his own death in the attempt to solve the mystery.  
"I guesses as how you'll let the Pilot play a lone hand now, Bravo Bob?" said Scalp-lock Dave, as the young man paused, when the Phantom Spy was discovered to be the game of the man who had won the *sobriquet* of Prairie Pilot, on account of his perfect knowledge of the prairies and mountains of the West.  
"I thought you knew me better than that, Dave," said the young man, whose reckless nature had caused his companions to dub him Bravo Bob, for there were few things that the handsome and youthful scout dare not do.  
A moment after Bravo Bob also dashed out upon the trail of the Prairie Pilot and the Phantom Spy.  
"Wal, then as want ter kin go a-trailin' arter spooks and spooks; but, as for Dave Dorsey, he wants to save the leetle ha'r he has," and Scalp-lock Dave tenderly ran his fingers through the bunch of hair growing upon the top of his head, looking like an island in a lake, with the rest of his skull perfectly bald.  
"I'm with yer, pard; I ain't no hunter for ghosties, and I ain't lost no spook nor spert, so I ain't a-lookin' fer none."  
"The Pilot hired us fur hunters across the plains, an' it's our dooty to stand by this heur train 'til it gits whar it's a-goin'; so as the Pilot and Bob's off on the trail of a spert gal, why, we's jist got to do double dooty, an' I'm of opinion we'd better set a watch an' turn in." This opinion of Yankee Sam seemed to meet

with general assent from the traders and teamsters, and after a guard was set, they all returned to their blankets; yet, strive as they would, their dreams would turn upon the two daring men who had gone forth in pursuit of the Phantom Spy.  
CHAPTER II.  
RUN DOWN.  
LIKE the very wind the Phantom Spy and the Prairie Pilot were borne over the prairie by their fleet steeds, the pursued steadily gaining upon the pursuer.  
"Come, Racer, you must mend your pace, or yonder fleet animal will run you out of sight," cried Prairie Pilot, and encouraged by his master's voice, the noble steed bounded forward with renewed exertion, and steadily began to gain upon the phantom horse and rider.  
Presently the white form turned and glanced behind, as though hearing the nearer approach of the pursuer, and at once a ghostly-looking arm was seen to rise and fall in quick succession several times, and the sound of a sharp blow each time reached the ears of Prairie Pilot, who exclaimed:  
"They are human, Racer, and you are driving the Phantom hard. On, on, old fellow, and we will yet solve the mystery!"  
With tremendous exertions both steeds then rushed on, at an almost incredible pace, and Bravo Bob, nearly a mile in their rear, felt that he was being distanced, although his horse was remarkably swift and possessed good bottom.  
In vain did the flying, snow-white steed strain every muscle; sharp and quick fell the blows of the whip to urge him on; but to no avail, for Racer's blood was up, and the cruel spur was kept constantly urging him on. The Prairie Pilot felt that the game was in his own hands, and a gleam of pleasure flashed in his dark eyes, for he felt that he was about to solve the mystery of that so-called phantom

horse and rider, which, for three years, had eluded all pursuit, and had become a terror upon the prairies.  
Who or what it could be, none knew; but certain it was, that when a party of scouts, or hunters, a wagon-train, or settlement on the border, beheld the weird horse and rider, ruin and bloodshed were sure to follow, until the apparition had been called the Phantom Spy, ever dogging the steps of those where booty was to be gained.  
Regarding the strange steed and rider, the Prairie Pilot had had his own views, which he kept to himself, and twice before he had seen and chased the apparition, but without result in his favor, as he was not then mounted upon his matchless Racer, the fleetest steed on the plains.  
Now it was different, for Racer was in superb condition, and he determined to overtake the fugitive if he drove his own noble animal to death.  
True, he could have ended the chase sooner, perhaps, by resorting to his rifle; but he would not fire upon a woman. No, he must depend upon Racer.  
And nobly did the fleet animal respond to his master's urging, and foot by foot drew nearer the chase, until only a score of lengths separated them.  
Then, suddenly, the white steed went down, and his rider was thrown thirty feet in front, and lay white and motionless, as though dead, while the animal sprang nimbly to his feet, unhurt by his fall on the soft prairie sward.  
With an iron hand Prairie Pilot drew Racer back upon his haunches, and springing to the ground, rushed to the side of the fallen rider.  
"Yes, it is a woman—nay, a mere girl. I hope she is not dead," he cried, earnestly, at the same time laying his hand over her breast.  
"No, she is merely stunned; I can soon revive her," and unslinging his canteen from his saddle, he began to bathe her face and hands, at the same time gazing in admiration upon her.

"How beautiful she is, and scarcely over sixteen! Who can she be?"

Indeed she was beautiful, with her wealth of brown hair, and graceful, delicate form, clad in a robe of pure white, worn loose and flowing, as if the better to keep up the weird character she played.

The face was lovely, bronzed by exposure, and every feature perfect, while the eyelids were fringed with the longest dark lashes; the feet were small, and incased in white canvas boots; upon her tiny hands she wore buck-skin gloves, and her head was encircled by a white veil of lightest material.

A moment or two Prairie Pilot rubbed her hands briskly, and bathed her face; then the eyes slowly opened and rested with a stare upon the man who bent over her.

"You have run me down, sir, at last," she said, in a stern voice for a girl, and in a tone of sarcasm.

"I regret your fall, Miss. I hope you are not hurt," replied Prairie Pilot, politely.

"I was merely stunned—hal there is Specter, and unharmed," and rising quickly, she called to her steed, which, with a low neigh, trotted to her side.

Gently she patted the faithful animal, and then abruptly turning to the man before her, she said:

"Who are you, sir?"

"Men call me the Prairie Pilot," quietly responded the scout.

The girl started, her face flushed in the bright moonlight, and her lustrous, dark-blue eyes turned full upon her captor, and there was admiration in the glance, for he was six feet tall, as straight as a lance, and with a form denoting great strength and activity, while his every motion was graceful.

He was clad in a handsome suit of dressed buck-skin, skillfully worked with beads and quills; his fringed leggings were stuck in the tops of cavalry boots, the heels of which were armed with huge silver spurs of the Mexican pattern.

His face was shaded by a broad sombrero, encircled by a silver cord, and a heavy, silken beard, of dark brown, concealed his lower features and fell down to his belt; but the face was exceedingly handsome—the brow broad and high, and the eyes bright, full of intense feeling, and fearless, while the expressions resting thereon were courage and stern determination.

His hair, the same color as his beard, was wavy, and hung far down his back, giving him a rather dashing appearance.

A repeating rifle hung at his back, and in his belt were three revolvers and a large bowie-knife.

From the handsome man before her, the maiden's eyes turned upon the splendid animal, quietly cropping the short prairie grass, and patiently awaiting his master. A finer steed she never saw, with his long, gaunt body, muscular limbs, glossy black hide, arching neck and small head.

Brightly glittered the moonlight upon the silver-horseshoed Mexican saddle and bridle, and the young girl observed that the rifle, revolvers and knife of the scout were mounted with the same precious metal.

Often before she had heard of the Prairie Pilot, a man who had passed half a score of years upon the border, and coming from none knew where.

His name none knew, other than that men called him Prairie Pilot, scout, guide, and hunter, and in an encounter those who knew him shunned him.

"I have heard of the man they call Prairie Pilot. I feel sure less keenly, when I know who it is that has taken me," said the young girl, after a quick but careful scrutiny of horse and rider.

"You are complimentary, Miss; but may I ask who is my fair prisoner?"

"Like yourself, I have a name given me on the plains; I am called the Phantom Spy."

"That I knew. It was to solve the mystery of your masquerade I followed you."

"And now that you have run me down, what is your intention regarding me?"

"To release you, upon one condition—"

"And that is—?"

"I have noticed that after you are discovered upon the trail of a train, a band of robbers, under the lead of the Hermit Chief, invariably make an attack: are you their spy?"

"You had a condition, I believe, for my release," evasively replied the girl.

"Yes; promise me that you will not report the train from which I chased you, and you shall go free."

"If I refuse to promise—what then?"

"I will see that you do not, by retaining you as a prisoner."

"I will promise you in good faith."

"Very well. Can I aid you to mount?"

"No," and with a bound the girl was on the back of her steed, when she continued:

"I thank you, Prairie Pilot, and before I go I would give you a word of warning: keep away from yonder range of hills, for men live there who seek your life."

"I know it; there dwells the Hermit Chief and his band."

"Then heed my warning. Farewell."

With a word to her steed, the animal bounded away, heading in the direction of a range of hills, some six miles distant, and behind which the moon was slowly sinking from sight, and leaving the prairie in gloom and darkness, with the Prairie Pilot standing erect and motionless, gazing after the rapidly-receding form of the weird-looking horse and rider.

## CHAPTER III.

### BRABO BOB'S ADVENTURE.

WHEN morning broke over the prairie the encampment was astir, and Yankee Sam eagerly scanned the landscape for some sign of Prairie Pilot or Bravo Bob.

But, nothing was visible, far or near, and preparations for breakfast were carried briskly on, for it was the intention of the traders to push rapidly ahead under the guidance of Yankee Sam and Scalp-lock Dave, though they greatly regretted the absence of Prairie Pilot and his right-hand man, Bravo Bob.

Suddenly Scalp-lock Dave uttered a cry of pleasure, and over a roll of the prairie were visible two horsemen approaching the motte at a rapid gallop.

"The Pilot and Bob," cried several voices.

"Hold on, fellows; you are only half right. Yes, yonder comes Bravo Bob, but it ain't the Pilot with him, but another fellow; an' he's a prize, too, or my name ain't Sam Sloan."

The truth of Yankee Sam's remark was at once evident, for one of the riders was recognized now by all as Bravo Bob, while the other was a much smaller man than the Pilot, and had a short black beard, while his hands seemed tied behind him, and his horse was led by the scout.

A few moments more and the two horsemen darted up and were welcomed with a loud shout, to which Bravo Bob responded with a wild war-whoop that made the echoes ring through the timber.

"Well, ole boss, what hev yer to tell us?" cried Scalp-lock Dave, eagerly.

"Considerable, comrades; but first, take this robber and tie him to yonder tree, until we have time to set on his case," and then changing his manner into the frontier way of speaking, which he often used, Bravo Bob continued:

"Yer see, I follered close onto the trail of the Phantom and the Pilot—as close as I cud; but the hosses fairly flew, an' I was left a long way behind; but I prest the trail hard, and arter an hour came up with traces of a tumble, and so I got down, I see'd whar the Phantom's hoss had pitched into a prairie-dog hole, and tossed his rider a long way ahead."

"Wall, here is whar the Pilot overhauled the Phantom, for ther was marks all round, and then the trail of the white hoss branched off toward the hills, and arter considerable trouble I found whar the Pilot had circled round and ag'in struck the Phantom's trail, and followed it."

"Wall, I prest on, too, an' arter awhile the moon went down an' I couldn't see the trail, but I went on, an' suddenly heard a pistol-shot, an' then another, an' then one of the Pilot's war-cries."

"Then, you bet, I made ole Iron Heart git over the grass, an' I was a-dashin' inter the timber when I run inter that thar varmint ag'in the tree."

"Wall, we clinched, an' arter a tumble to ther ground an' a long tussle I choked him still, an' tied him; then I caught his hoss an' waited fer him to come to his senses."

"I hadn't long to wait, an' by some pointed argument, with my bowie, I got out of ther feller that the Pilot had gone on inter the hills, with more company than he wanted, jist then."

"So I concluded to jest make this feller come back to camp with me, an' when day broke I recognized him as the very devil who kilt Abe Homer two years ago, an' was senten't to be hung, but got away; but he can't git away now," and Bravo Bob spoke with bitter determination.

"Does yer b'lieve the Pilot's passed in his checks, Bob?" asked Yankee Sam, very seriously.

"I don't know what to think; but I'm goin' to find out."

"How so, pard?"

"Why, as soon as we try and hang yonder villain, you had better press on with the train to the posts. I am going to return to the hills and look up the Pilot."

"It's mighty risky, Bob."

"Yes, but Prairie Pilot would do the same for me, or you, or any one in need of help. I'm goin', boys, if I g'under."

"Wall, I know yer, Bob, so I won't argue to turn yer back from yer purpus; but I hates to see yer go alone," said Yankee Sam.

"An' so does I, pard," put in Scalp-lock Dave.

"Anyhow," he continued, "we'll run ther train onto ther posts, an' ef yer don't put in an appearance soon arter we'll return with some boys an' look yer up, or git some ha'r."

"Thank you, my friends," replied Bravo Bob, again resuming his natural way of speaking; "thank you. Now let us to work and try this fellow, whom I recognize as the murderer of Abe Homer."

"And I as one of the band of the Hermit Chief, who two years ago attacked a train I was driving in, and plundered it, after killing a dozen good fellows and wounding me; but I got away from the devils," said a tall teamster, approaching, whip in hand.

All eyes were at once turned upon the prisoner, whose face was the index of his evil heart, and at once it was decided that he should be hung, and that immediately.

In vain was it that Bravo Bob questioned the robber, regarding the fate of Prairie Pilot, and of the whereabouts of his band; he would answer nothing—only beg piteously for his life.

But he begged for mercy to those who felt no mercy, for the band of the Hermit Chief had for years been the terror of the border, and they were determined to make an example of the prisoner then in their power.

Amid the piteous cries of the doomed wretch a rope was quickly thrown over the limb of a tree, and the noose fitted around the neck of the struggling wretch.

"Hoist him up!" was the stern order from Bravo Bob, and a dozen men, who held the other end of the rope, quickly drew him into the air.

The end of the rope was then made fast, and quickly the train was in motion, filing out across the prairie, and leaving the timber-land alone with its ghastly spectacle.

A short distance from the motte Bravo Bob bade his companions farewell, and amid a shower of good wishes for luck, branched off alone upon the trail of the Prairie Pilot.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A PRISONER.

WHEN Prairie Pilot saw the young girl disappear in the distance, he quickly mounted Racer and moved off at a rapid gallop toward the range of hills.

After a ride of some moments he changed his course, going parallel with the hills for some distance, and riding slowly, while he cautiously scanned the ground by the lingering light of the moon.

Then he came to a halt, dismounted, and said, in a low tone:

"Down! Racer!"

Instantly the intelligent animal dropped upon the ground and lay flat upon his side, the scout also throwing himself at full length upon the prairie.

Not long had he been in his recumbent position when there was heard the sound of hoof-strokes, and soon after the white horse and fair rider appeared in sight, riding in an easy canter toward the hills.

Without observing the scout and his horse, the maiden passed by within thirty yards of them, when a neigh from Specter caused her to quicken her pace, as though her flight and capture had made her nervous of danger.

Hardly had she been lost sight of in the gloom when a word from Prairie Pilot brought Racer again upon his feet, and, mounting in haste, he set out on the trail of the strange girl.

Keeping the white form just in sight, and knowing that he was invisible to her, in his dark clothes, Prairie Pilot continued on until the darkness grew deeper and deeper as they drew nearer the shadow of the hills, which now loomed boldly up, not half a mile distant.

As though perfectly acquainted with the surroundings, the maiden directed her course to the left, toward a bold and rugged hill, which terminated so abruptly upon the prairie that it formed a cliff.

Around the base of this precipitous hill the ghostly horse and rider wound, and were lost to the sight of the scout.

"It is certain that I cannot follow her further to-night, without making my presence known, so I had better go into camp in the foothills until the morning, and then strike her trail."

trail, for I am determined to track out this den of robbers."

So saying, the scout rode in under the shadow of the hill, and finding a suitable and secluded gulch, in which to camp, he dismounted, and leaving the faithful Racer standing patiently awaiting, he moved around cautiously in search of some dried brush, for he was determined to have a warm supper after his hard ride.

He succeeded in finding some dry sticks, and had just kindled a small blaze, when there came a whirr through the air, a blow upon his head, and he was hurled backward several paces, his arms pinioned to his side by the noose of a lasso.

Though thus taken at a disadvantage, Prairie Pilot managed to get his hand upon his revolver, and a tall form rushing toward him, fell dead, shot through the heart by the scout.

But, before he could free himself from the noose, strong as he was, there flashed forth two shots from the dark underbrush, and Prairie Pilot staggered back and fell his full length upon the ground, while with discordant yells half a dozen dark forms bounded out from the covert that had concealed them.

Their sudden rush startled Racer, who, doubtless seeing that he could render his master no service, turned quickly, and with a wild neigh dashed away in the direction in which he had come.

But the scout had not been killed by the shot, only stunned momentarily, by the bullet grazing his temple, and as his assailants rushed upon him, they found that they had caught a Tartar, and only by their united strength, and by a most desperate struggle, were they enabled to securely bind their formidable prisoner.

The fire built by the scout had, in the mean time, blazed brightly up, and Prairie Pilot found himself the prisoner of half a score of as hard a looking set of villains as he had ever seen on the border.

A closer scrutiny of them, and he knew that he was in the hands of the robber-band of the Hermit Chief, and that no mercy would be shown him he well knew, for often had he trailed one of the Bandit Brotherhood to his death, and fearlessly waged war against the bold renegades who spread terror along the frontier.

Presently a horseman rode up to the spot, and after a few words with several of the men, dismounted and approached the scout.

He was a man of striking appearance, clad in a suit consisting of buck-skin leggings, top-boots, a military coat, and Mexican sombrero, while he wore a sword, and a pair of revolvers in his belt.

His face was exceedingly handsome, with its bronzed skin, dark hair and mustache, and bright eyes; though there was a certain bold and reckless look stamped upon every feature.

His hair was worn long, and his mustache was curled up at either end, while his whole "make-up" was that of a border exquiste.

He seemed scarcely more than twenty years of age, and was well mounted upon a dark bay mustang, large, wiry and vicious-looking.

Prairie Pilot had before seen the man, and in several engagements had endeavored to cut short his career of crime, but Satan seemed to always look after his own, and the young bandit leader had escaped.

In this man the scout recognized the field chief of the bandits, Captain Ralph, the lieutenant of the Hermit Chief.

"Are you not the man they call Prairie Pilot?" asked Captain Ralph.

"I am; are you not the man they call Captain Ralph, the murderer and horse-thief?" coolly replied Prairie Pilot.

"Hold, Sir Scout, or I will cut you down where you stand," angrily cried the young bandit.

"Cutting throats is your trade, youngster."

"Do you dare me, and in my power, fellow?"

"You dare not unbind me and meet me as man to man, although men say you are no coward," sneeringly returned the scout.

For an instant Captain Ralph seemed about to strike the scout with his sword; but then, as if changing his mind, he sheathed his weapon, and said, quietly:

"Your pluck will be tried, sir, ere the Hermit Chief is done with you. Come, boys; lead him on to the stronghold, but blindfold him first. I suppose it would be useless to attempt to capture his horse! I would give a cool thousand for that animal."

"No, Captain Ralph, there are not horses enough in the band to run down that steed. Shall we take the prisoner at once to the chief?" asked one of the men, who seemed to be an under officer.

"No; father is not at all well, and I do not wish to disturb him. Put the prisoner in the cliff cave."

So saying, Captain Ralph rode away, and a few moments after Prairie Pilot was blindfolded, and then mounted upon a mustang, after which the party set off on a trail leading still further into the range of hills.

(To be continued.)

## DOLOROSO.

BY JOHN GOSPIE.

This is the song of the soul that dies With love in its heart and love in its eyes:

"Hold me so close in your arms, my own, That I may be happy till life is all gone."

Over and over the sweet song is sung In the hush of the falling twilight tongue;

Over and over the heart sings true: "Darling, I'm dying with love for you."

The night comes so soon! it is such a surprise! To think that the daybreak can nevermore rise

On the tops of the mountains and send us its glow, Since one is above, while the other's below!

The night seemeth endless! Oh heart, canst thou wait? Canst thou hearken to God, and to man's talk of Fate?

Thou dost hear but one voice—thou dost listen to none— And that is the voice of thy love that is gone!

## Little Volcano, THE BOY MINER; OR, The Pirates of the Placers.

A ROMANCE OF LIFE AMONG THE LAWLESS.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S EYE," "PACIFIC PETE," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### PREPARING FOR WORK.

FOR one moment they stood glaring upon the lump of dull yellow metal. Their breath came in short, quick puffs. Their faces grew inflamed, their eyes bloodshot. Instead of blood liquid fire seemed coursing through their veins.

Little Volcano suddenly drew back his hand and thrust the nugget into his pocket, scowling at Zimri Coon as though fearing lest he should attempt to rob him—then he fell upon his knees and began tearing up the sandy soil, flinging bits of rock aside with a curse after eagerly glancing at them—now and then uttering low, growling sounds of ferocious delight as other golden nuggets were unearthed by his nervous fingers.

He had the "yellow fever" in its most virulent form.

Zimri Coon stood by, leaning upon his rifle, his eyes riveted upon the flushed countenance of his friend, now scarcely human in its covetous madness. For one moment he too had been affected by the burning lust of gold—but the madness quickly left him as he noted its effects upon the boy miner. The frightful change in him acted as an antidote—and well it was that such was the case.

"Ef I was like him whar'd we be?" muttered the old man, wistfully watching the boy miner as he continued his frantic search.

"Most like we would git to cuttin' of each other's throats afore sunset. At best we'd hev thoats fer nothin' else but gold—jest keep on a-scratchin' fer it ontel we drapped down, clean tuckered out, or them 'tarnal cusses over yander sneak up an' fill our karkidges fuller'n a Ute's head is o' lice. That's what it'd eend in. Mebbe 't'will, anyhow—he's so durned headstrong an' contrairy when he oncet gits sot, thar's most as much hope o' ticklin' a snappin'-turkle onto the shoulders 'th a straw, as movin' him! I'm most sorry we come—I am so."

Little Volcano had eyes only for the gold. Indeed it was a sight to set wild far older and steadier heads than his. Truly the placer was a marvel of richness, were one to judge by the specimens already gathered.

Any other than a skilled miner might have passed over the spot scores of times and never suspected what riches he was treading under foot.

Any man who had places where the gold lay in such marvelous quantities that the sun's rays were refracted with blinding brilliancy—where one could load it into a wagon with a scoop-shovel—provided one possessed those convenient accessories—and much more equally brilliant and truthful. Little Volcano was not so favored; his placer lacked all these glowing attributes—and perhaps 'twas just as well.

It is a "queer" sort of virgin gold that dazzles the eye—that lies all above ground, and still stranger soil in which the real gold will not be found, burrowing down until it is stopped by the clay or bed-rock.

In this case an old prospector would have been fairly pleased; the valley had been a water-course for ages untold, and at this point had made an abrupt turn against the base of a range. At the foot of this the soil was thin, composed, first, of sand and gravel, mixed with earth; beneath this a few inches of black soil, resting upon hard, fine-grained clay. 'n this sand lay the bulk of the gold, unable to pass the dense clay. In some cases—though rarely a nugget was exposed to view, where the soil was unusually thin, or something had torn up the ground.

Zimri Coon watched Little Volcano for some time, never noticed by the boy miner who tore up the ground and pried over pieces of stone with his knife as furiously as at first, nearly every minute unearthing a nugget of greater or less value—sometimes changing upon a little nest where the precious bits of metal lay touching each other, until his pockets were crammed—then with a sigh the old man turned away. He at least had not forgotten the threatening danger—he knew that Sleepy George's party would not be long in making their appearance, and, once let them suspect the marvelous richness of this placer, they would hesitate at nothing in order to make its treasure their own.

"They ain't no use in thinkin' o' playin' sharp on 'em," muttered Zimri, thoughtfully. "The boy is dead gone. The devil himself—hide, horns an' all—couldn't skeer him out o' this. He'll jest keep on a-diggin' ontel he smells thar powder-a-burnin'—wuss luck! I'd like it, too—ef I dared let myself went—but ef I did I wouldn't know when to stop; then we would be gone, sure!"

He gazed keenly around. The scene was picturesque enough, but that wild beauty was not in his thoughts now. The towering hills and rocky crags, relieved by the dark-green shrubs and trees, lining each side of the valley, were not half so interesting now as the loose-lying boulders lying along the hill's foot. A shrewd smile gradually lighted up his face as he nodded toward the perpendicular rock beyond Little Volcano.

"Right thar's the place—I kin rig it up fit to fight a hull tribe. Them dernicks yender's jest the ticket. Ef the boy would only wake up to lend a feller a hand—but he won't ontel he's clean tuckered out an' hed a snooze over it."

Though he believed there was an abundance of time, the old miner had learned prudence in his wanderings, and he at once set about the work he had planned, laboriously rolling heavy boulders together so as to form a rude semicircle with the face of the cliff for a back. At first Little Volcano paid no attention to him, but then, as the old man paused, breathless over his exertion, the boy miner's better self was awakened, and he sprang to his friend's assistance.

"Keep to your gold-scratchin', little 'un—I kin manage by myself," said Zimri, kindly.

"They's no pertic'lar hurry—jest so it's done afore night."

"So can the gold wait," half-laughed Little Volcano, wiping his streaming face. "I believe I was half-crazy—and isn't it enough to make one?" at the same time emptying his pockets of their precious load upon the shingle inside the little inclosure. "Look at that! Ten thousand dollars' worth, if there's a cent! and dead loads of it where that came from, too! Old man, we're the two richest men in California to-day!"

"That's good enough, little 'un," quietly replied Zimri; "but it ain't everythin'. Old as I be, I val'e my life as more'n all the gold ever hearn on. That's why I'm doin' this work, instead o' rakin' in the purty nuggets."

"You think they'll find us, then?"

"I know it—jest as sure as the sun is up yender, them buzzards o' 'tarnal cussedness 'll nose us out here."

But if Sleepy George alone knew where they were hidden—for—and he's past tellin'—

"Past smellin' little 'un," chuckled Zimri, gleefully. "Past smellin' I'll not gainsay—but I reckon his jawin' tackle ain't past workin', yit. I told you I didn't keer about strikin' the fast blow—nur I wouldn't 'a' did as much as I did if they hadn't pitched onto that crazy critter. Seein' they did that, I thought I'd mark the varmint—an' so I did, fer keeps! Sleepy George wasn't never no beauty, but I reckon he's no better—a pesky sight wuss, now—fer I tuck off the eend o' his nose—Lord! how the cuss did squeal! Reckon he thought the devil was helpin' him blow his bugle that time—an' never stoppin' to cool his fingers, nuther," and the old fellow went off into a fit

of laughter that did not improve his wind any.

"If he comes within range here I'll choose a better mark than his nose," muttered the boy miner. "But to work. We'll finish this first, then rake in what gold we can before they come to trouble us."

"We'd ought to have more grub; they's no tellin' how long the cusses 'll keep us cooped up—'tain't in 'em to stan' up to thar gruel an' hev it out like men. They'll try the sneakin' dodge, most likely," grumbled Coon.

"We've enough for a week, with care. It will be ended before that time. Water will be the worst. There's none nearer than the spring, over yonder, and our canteens won't hold much."

"That's easy fixed. They's plenty o' flat rocks an' good stiff clay. I'll dig a hole in thar, lay rocks bottom an' sides, plaster 'em thick with clay, an' thar you hev it. But fast git up these walls; then while you're fillin' up the holes—fix some stone plugs in so you kin pull 'em out to shoot through—I'll tend to makin' the well."

The comrades worked stoutly, never thinking of fatigue, for both were eager to get back to the gold. Zimri built his "well" and filled it with water from the spring. It held probably ten gallons, and seemed perfectly tight. A flat stone served as a cover, to keep it from the sun and dust. By this time Little Volcano had finished his chinking. The result was an admirable stone fort, some twenty feet long by ten in diameter, at its widest part, completely bullet-proof, unless when the plugs were removed from the loop-holes.

"We wasn't none too soon, nuther," muttered Zimri to the boy miner, as they recommenced turning over the dirt for gold. "Don't move your head, but look up yender, jest to the right of whar we come down."

The figure of a man was distinctly visible for a moment, then quickly disappeared behind a clump of bushes.

from their covert. But even his tongue tired, and he relapsed into disgusted silence. Evidently the enemy were resolved to await the coming day.

"They're no use in our both stayin' awake," at length said Zimri, to the boy miner. "Them cowardly rips don't mean to do nothin' more to-night, an' one pa'r o' eyes kin do all the watchin' needful. You lay down fer a couple o' hours, then I'll rouse ye out an' try a snooze myself. No back talk—do as I tell ye."

It was a dreary watch, and more than once Zimri caught himself wishing for the day-dawn. The moon rolled steadily along, soon dipping beyond the western rock-range, throwing the little valley into deepest shadow, and though the stars twinkled brightly, their rays served only to render darkness visible—to increase the many shadows which seemed to be creeping here and there, each one taking the shape of a bloodthirsty enemy to the strained eyes of the watcher. A night vigil not soon to be forgotten, and with a sensation of profound relief Zimri Coon watched the growing light in the east.

Eagerly he peered out over the valley, for, during the past hour, while the gloom was the deepest, he had heard the gamblers busy at work—and now he saw the result.

Before him, distant some fifty yards, was a rude wall, or rather pile of rocks, thrown hastily together. Behind this rose a clump of bushes, and a scattering line of similar ones, under cover of which a creeping man could easily pass beyond rifle-shot of the rock fort, in case of need.

"You keep your word well, old man," said the boy miner, awakening with a yawn. "Why didn't you call me, as you said?"

"They'll be plenty time afore all's done, little 'un. Take a squint out thar—looks like the cusses mean little old business, don't it? The pesky cowards mean to try the starvin'-out dodge, I rally believe!" in disgust.

"Look at that body!" muttered Little Volcano, in a hoarse, strained voice. "Don't you recognize it?"

"Looks like—durned ef 'tain't!" was the reply, after a moment's scrutiny. "He won't never steal no more chips."

"Laughing Dick! if she only knew—!"

"Twasn't you did it, little 'un. I seed the warmint drap when I pulled trigger. I didn't know him, then, but ef it'd bin broad day, he's the werry one I'd 'a' picked out. As fer her—s'posin' they wasn't no mistake in your seein' them together—why, it jest serves her right fer consortin' with such o' rummy trash."

"Look—they are showing a rag!" "Tisn't white, but I suppose it's meant for a flag of truce. Better answer."

"Say, you fellers!" came a challenge, in a muffled, indistinct voice. "We want to have a talk."

"Who's hinderin' on ye, ye durn fool?" "Promise not to shoot, and I'll come out where we can talk more comfortably; honor bright, now."

"You can't come no brace game on me, laddy 'n—not much! I wouldn't trust ye furdur 'n you could sling a dead grizzly by the tail—which is mighty short grips. You kin speak your speech from onder kiver; the fust inch o' hide I see 'll hev to kiver a bullet—s'posin'!"

"You struck the fust lick, an' now we're playin' fer keeps, you mind that," retorted Zimri, at his loophole.

"That's a lie! you shot me last night like a coward sneak in the bushes!" screamed Sleepy George, evidently fairly awake now, if never before.

"When I pull on a critter, he's dead meat, he is. Say yer say, or shet your trap."

"That's easy said—short an' sweet," interrupted another voice, impatiently. "You have jumped our claim, hyar, ag'in' all diggers' law, an' when we 'tempt to git back our own, you pitch onto us from a' ambush an' shoot one o' us dead. We've got the law on our side an' would be held clear in shootin' ye down like thieves an' murderers; but we're easy goin' critters. We don't want to be too hard on ye this time. Jist promise ye won't try to make no more rumpus, an' we'll let ye go free, takin' with ye what you dug yesterday. That's plain an' easy to understand. Now what ye goin' to do 'bout it?"

"Fust: every word you've spoken is a durned lie, 'cept what's true, an' that's a lie too! This is our claim. You never knowed o' this spot 'till you dogged us here. You watched us on tel you thought you cotched us nappin', then you tried to wipe us out—you burned the fust powder. We did make cold meat one o' you, an' stan' ready to sarve the rest jist the same way. As fer skippin' out, that hain't our style. We own this place an' we mean to hold it, too. Thar—you've got your answer: how ye like it?"

"Better than you will in the end. All we've got to do is to take our time on tel you've starved into good sense ag'in. You see we've got the deadwood on ye. We can send out fer bread an' water—but you can't. Jist figger that up an' see how the sum comes out," chuckled the miner.

A pistol shot replied—followed by a fierce curse. The keen eye of Little Volcano caught a glimpse of a red shirt through one of the rocks in the pile of stones, and instantly sent a bullet to feel its texture.

All parleying was now at an end. Several shots were interchanged, aim being taken at the little loopholes or cracks, but apparently without material success. And, knowing that a chance shot might end all, the besieged lay close while keeping a good lookout.

And so the day wore on, Zimri keeping his tongue well limbered with stinging taunts and jeers, seeking to madden the enemy into risking all upon one bold rush; but without success. Either they had some better plan in view, or they were too thick-skinned to be stung as he hoped.

The sun passed its meridian, and still no change. Zimri was fuming and boiling over, declaring that if this lasted much longer he would break cover and clean out the lot himself, when Little Volcano pointed down the valley. A body of horsemen could just be discerned, and they were plainly coming up the valley. It would be hard to tell whether the besieged were most pleased or alarmed. Even if the new comers should frighten the gamblers away—and from the stir among them it was plain that they also had made the discovery—the secret of the gold placer would no longer be theirs.

"Look! they mean business, whoever they are!" cried the boy miner, as the horsemen broke into a gallop.

"An' so do I!" grated Zimri, as his rifle cracked spitefully.

The gamblers had broken cover and were running at full speed toward the hills; but one would never reach them. Overtaken by the leaden missile, he plunged heavily forward, writhing in the throes of death.

"Hallo!" shouted the foremost rider, in Spanish, as he dashed up. "Who are you—friends or foes?"

"That's fer you to say—ef you be twenty to one," undauntedly cried Zimri—but Little Volcano sprung forward.

"You should know my face, senior—"

With a glad cry Joaquín Murietta leaped from his horse and came forward, warmly greeting the boy miner. Zimri stood moodily by, while his comrade told the outlaw all that had occurred. Evidently he did not like the situation, and cast more than one anxious glance toward the rocks where the gamblers had disappeared.

"My men shall hunt them coyotes down—and then return here to help you secure your treasure," warmly cried the outlaw chief, motioning his men forward.

"No—there is no need of so much trouble. Now they have fled, my friend and I can manage very well," said the boy miner, a little coldly, for he, too, had not forgotten how his name had been coupled with the outlaw, already.

"Very well—Joaquín Murietta is not one to thrust his aid where 'tis not welcome," a little sharply said the outlaw. "Forward, men! hunt down those dogs—don't let one escape to tell of what they have seen!" and he leaped to his saddle and spurred away, followed by his band.

"Ef he kin only do it!" muttered Zimri. "Ef he only kin! But let one o' them cusses git back to Hard Luck, an' our chance won't be wuth a rotten aig!"

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### JACK HAYES RAKES DOWN THE POT.

It is not difficult to imagine what intense chagrin must have been felt by such a man as Sheriff Hayes at the double escape of Joaquín Murietta from Hard Luck, the headquarters of a strong force of men organized expressly for the purpose of killing him and exterminating his band of outthroats. A more deadly insult could not have been offered him. Until this, he had been deemed invincible; and though, as a rule, Jack Hayes was a quiet, unassuming man, he prided himself not a little upon this reputation. It was not to be expected, then, that he should quietly submit to this double insult, and the Hard Luckians knew that "the old man" meant business when he bade his company of Man-Hunters to prepare for a long and hard ride.

"Tain't none too soon, nuther," said Arkansas Jack to a chum, as they mustered before the Dew Drop Inn. "They say Cap'n Harry Love hev tuck the trail 'long o' some twenty odd o' the boys he know'd in the greaser mess. Ef it's true, we've got to work right plart of we spect to finger any o' that head-money, you bet!"

Jack Gabriel led the way to Arroyo Cantura—the spot where he had his first fight with Joaquín—but the game had flown, leaving no trail behind them, no sign save the coal ashes of their fire, the beaten ground where their tents had stood. Here and there the Man-Hunters rode—but it was like chasing a will o' the wisp. Information they had—too much of it, in fact. Nearly every man they met could tell them where Joaquín was likely to be found, and nimble tongues readily mapped out the course they were to follow—but the results were the same in each case: disappointment. The same in all, that is, but one. Four times they had been deceived by false information; the fifth time, after hearing all the dirty, greasy, tattered, yet pompous and dignified Senor Don Something-or-other had to communicate, Jack Hayes nodded to Jack Gabriel, who coolly collared the Spaniard and unceremoniously seated him upon the cante of his saddle. And when the end of the trail was reached, without sign of Murietta, the Man-Hunters rode quietly out of the valley; but behind them, dangling from the limb of an oak tree, remained their guide.

And yet, as it afterward proved, the wretched Spaniard had been perfectly sincere in his information, however he had gained it. Joaquín had intended to pause for the night in the very valley where the Spaniard died—had he not been drawn aside by the sound of rifle shots.

The Man-Hunters were just finishing their morning meal, having given it more time than customary, as they knew in nearly know in which direction to ride next. The sharp challenge of their outpost called the attention of all to a little band of men who had just made their appearance upon the hillside. Though dirty, blood-stained and wayworn, the new comers were readily recognized, and one—whose hand was in a sling, whose face was swathed in a bloody bandage—was drawn aside by Sheriff Hayes, who listened eagerly and with close interest to his communication.

Boot and saddle was sounded—the men quickly mounted and fell in order, leaving the four wayfarers behind them as they rode rapidly away. Winding through the hills for several miles, Jack Hayes led the way into a narrow valley, long and irregular in outline.

"They's game ahead, boss!" cried Arkansas Jack, his eyes glowing as he pointed up the valley. "Look at the two-legged cusses split fer kiver!"

"Easy, Jack—don't burn your powder before the time comes. Gentlemen," he added, turning toward his followers. "I think we've struck a lead at last—but mind; I'm going to work this job up my own way. You are not to touch a weapon until I give the word; remember that. I have my reasons, but if any gentleman don't think they are sufficient, I shall be most happy to convince him, after the show is over."

They were satisfied and said so; few persons who knew the sheriff's wonderful powers of argument, ever cared to differ with him—at least in open words.

As Arkansas Jack said, the game was afoot; but it did not make a long flight, only a few rods, then disappeared behind a pile of rocks. Toward these Hayes led his men, but when within one hundred yards a sharp voice bade him stand.

"Halt there! You needn't mind 'bout comin' no closer on tel you tell us what you want," was what the voice said.

"Don't act the fool, old man," retorted Hayes, but nevertheless he drew rein as the dark muzzle of a rifle covered him. "You'll gain nothing by it. Even if we meant you—far more than we do—how could you help yourselves?"

"You wouldn't come no furdur, an' a good chance o' your men wouldn't make the hull trip here—that much we kin do, anyway; But—what do 'ee want, anyway?"

"We want you, Zimri Coon, and your partner—Little Volcano, as he calls himself. If you will give yourself up quietly, so much the better for us all; if not—then we'll have to take you, alive if possible, but take you anyway."

"What have we done that you come here with a crowd as though hunting wild beast?" cried Little Volcano, angrily.

"That you will learn in good time, if you don't know already. But I didn't come here to talk. If you surrender, quietly, I promise you fair treatment and a square trial. If you are foolhardy enough to resist, so much the worse for you both," coolly uttered the sheriff, riding leisurely forward, followed at a little distance by his men.

"He'll keep his word—we must give in, little 'un," hastily muttered Zimri, to the boy miner. "I don't believe they kin prove anythin' ag'in' us." Then adding aloud, as he stepped outside the rock fort: "You've got the bulge on us this time, boss. We'll take your word fer givin' us a fair show an' no favor—it's all we ax."

"You shall have it—I give you my word. I really believe you two are square men, clean through, or I should have acted a little differently; I'm better on the act than on the talk," laughed the sheriff.

"An' Jack Hayes is the only man I'd give up to, without knowin' somethin' more o' his reasons than this. But see here, cap'n—we've made a strike here, an' though we hain't got our papers jest yet, it'd be mighty hard to lose our claim by havin' it jumped while we're in limbo under a mistake, now wouldn't it?"

"None of my men shall interfere, and if, after you have cleared yourselves—as I hope and trust you will—there are any interlopers, I will see that you have justice."

"Good enough! Then mebbe you'll take charge of a little dust what we've maniged to scrape together. I reckon thar's enough to pay fer totin' it," and with a self-satisfied chuckle Zimri Coon unearthed their goodly store of gold.

The Man-Hunters crowded around with exclamations of wonder, envious looks and some black thoughts; but Sheriff Hayes held them under good control, and what he ordered was promptly obeyed. The gold was secured upon one horse, the prisoners mounted behind two of the men, and then Hayes addressed his men.

He said the two prisoners must be taken back to Hard Luck, and there closely guarded until his return; six men would be sufficient for that purpose. They were to be held responsible for the safety of both prisoners and gold. Himself and the main body were to press on in pursuit of Joaquín, who had passed through this valley only the evening previous. This said, the six men were drawn by lot, and the party divided, Arkansas Jack being placed in charge of the captives.

It was evident that Jack Gabriel meant to run no unnecessary risk. His captives had already surrendered their arms; now he caused their arms to be bound firmly behind their backs, and as they were placed en coupe, a stout thong was passed around their waists, and that of the man behind whom they were seated.

"The time will come when you fellows will have to pay big for this," muttered Little Volcano, in a strained voice, but the Man-Hunters only laughed at the threat as they rode on, heading for their last night's camp, where they found the four men still awaiting their return.

It was a bitter blow to the prisoners, this meeting with Sleepy George and his comrades, and more than once they cursed their folly in not levanting while they had the chance, satisfying themselves with the moderate fortune they had already gathered.

Now that the guardians of the placer were in bonds, Sleepy George and his chums were eager to go their way—but that was not to be. Jack Hayes had given his orders, and Gabriel meant to execute them at all hazards.

"You're goin' 'long o' us, back to town, my lad—them's the cap'n's orders, an' I'm goin' to see they're follered or bust somethin'." You've set this thing goin', an' now you've got to keep up your end, or they'll be a funeral mighty quick—an' you'll be fust mourner, too," bluntly quoth Jack from Arkansas.

Sleepy George knew his man, and so, making the best of a bad bargain, submitted. The back trail was taken up, and though the party were forced to travel slowly, Hard Luck was finally reached. Before entering town, Jack had a private word with the gamblers, stating that if each and every one of them were not promptly on hand whenever wanted, he would take it as a personal insult, and act accordingly.

Their arrival created an immense sensation in Hard Luck. Every one crowded around, eager to view the prisoners, and to learn for what crime they had been arrested. All this was bitter enough to Little Volcano, but doubly so was the sight of Mary Morton, a witness of his disgrace. After that he cared little for the rest, moving and looking more like an animated corpse than aught else.

They were placed in a stout log cabin, their arms all unbound, but stout handcuffs were substituted, though their legs were left free. The gold was unloaded and placed in the same building, Jack Gabriel insisting on their watching the whole affair, and obtaining their assurance that none of the gold was missing. Then he entered the prison with them, and the door was closed and secured.

"You see," he said, apologetically, "I'm held 'sponsible fer you two fellers an' that gold, or I wouldn't think o' 'trudin'." You kin jest play I ain't no more'n a log o' wood, an' I giv' my word I won't breathe one word o' anythin' I may hear in here, jest ef thar's anythin' you want as I kin git, jest spit it out, an' you shall hev it."

"I reckon they'll give us grub an' drink enough to keep from starvin'," said Zimri. "But ef you will—what is it we're brung here fer, anyway?"

"Wal, it's only fair you should know, I reckon," replied Jack, contemplatively. "The fust charge is b'longin' to Joaquín's band."

"A cussed lie!" hotly cried Coon, his eyes glowing.

"In course it is—you'd be a blame fool fer sayin' anythin' else," coolly returned Gabriel. "All you've got to do is to prove it, ye know. Then thar's that gold yender. It's said you bounced the fellers as really owned it, shot two on 'em down from ambush, an' driv' 'em thers away—you an' Joaquín an' his gang. Them's the other charges—murder an' stealin' gold as wash your faces."

The prisoners stared at each other in mute horror. Could this be possible? It seemed like a dream.

"When'll we hev a chance to meet these lies?" at length asked Zimri Coon.

"Soon's the boss comes home—an' that'll be to-morrow, I reckon. You'll be giv' a fair show afore Judge Lynch," was the cool reply, as Gabriel lighted his pipe.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 335.)

No good man will willingly speak evil of another. If circumstances will compel him to accuse, he will show that he does so reluctantly, and for the sake of justice, and that he scorns the thought of self-justification in such an act. If, therefore, any accusation appears to be grounded in a man, wanton or malignant spirit; if the occasion to make it appear to be sought; if the accuser speak not to the face of the accused, but behind his back, then it may be set down as certain that at least the truth is distorted, and that, in all probability, it is corruptly falsified. For where a revengeful and malignant spirit is, where the truth cannot dwell. The angel will not abide with the demon. The common perception of this fact is the reason why slanders are so little credited and do so little harm.

## LONG AGO YEARS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

Where are the mates of sweet childhood?  
Sweet childhood of poetry and glee;  
Poetry and glee in the wildwood,  
The wildwood so hallowed to me!

We trusted amid the gay flowers,  
Gay flowers that witnessed a vow;  
A vow of fond love that was ours,  
Was ours but not ours now.

Wee children who homaged to Cupid,  
To Cupid more merry than sage;  
Than sage, for it must have been stupid,  
Been stupid for dears at our age.

We loved one another most truly,  
Most truly we meant to be true;  
Be true, with a wedding time duly,  
Time duly has proved us untrue.

These mates have passed under the portals,  
The portals with wedding bells hung;  
Bells hung for the dance of gay mortals,  
Gay mortals and choirs that have sung.

And, ah! for the lives that are sour,  
Are sour and brimming with tears;  
With tears and with sighs for the hour,  
The hour of long ago years.

## Centennial Stories.

### THE VOICE IN THE NIGHT.

BY T. C. HARRAUGH.

"MOTHER, he has not forgotten the hour; I hear him coming up the river!"

Ada Heath spoke to her widowed mother who sat with bowed head at the little cottage window.

It was an evening in the beautiful autumn of 1781, and the sweetest of gloomings dimly revealed the pale and wrinkled face that was lifted at sound of Ada's voice.

"Coming? Oh! Ada!" and the widow rising received her daughter's form in her maternal embrace.

Then a silence, marred only by faint sobbing, reigned in the little room, and the twain did not separate until the sound of hoofs fell upon their ears.

"Keep your promise, child, and leave the future to God," said Mrs. Heath, as Ada started back with the palest of faces, and laid her hand on the door which she had lately opened to break the terrible tidings to her mother.

"I cannot face him in this plight," she said, answering her mother's look. "Do you receive him, mother, and say that I will be down in a few moments—tell him that the promise is to be kept if—I do not win."

Then the young girl left the room and Mrs. Heath turned to greet the men who stood on the step, rapping for admission.

"Good-night, Mrs. Heath," said the foremost one, doffing his hat politely, and his companions followed his example as they crossed the threshold into the shadowed room.

The salutation was returned, and when the widow's lamp lit up the apartment the two stood revealed. They were men in the prime of life—men prepossessing in features, and well clad. The one who first addressed the widow wore the undress uniform of a British officer, while his companions looked like military men, though they bore no insignia of military rank.

Mrs. Heath delivered her daughter's parting words to the first-mentioned member of the party, and he smiled pleasantly in return.

"Your daughter cannot win," he said, in a tone tinged with triumph which he could not conceal. "The latest advices from the North are favorable to the royal cause. Clinton will certainly raise the siege of Yorktown, and Washington will soon be flying before our victorious troops."

An audible sigh escaped the widow's lips, and her eyes fell before the speaker's look.

"The events of this year have proven very disastrous to our cause," she said, in a low and sorrowful tone. "But we still trust in the God of battles. My daughter will try to love you, Captain Donald, she—"

"Try to love me, Mrs. Heath?" interrupted the officer, with a proud curling of the lip. "Time will heal the old wounds, and in my English home she will forget that I drew my sword against American rebellion."

"Forget it?" said the widow, with an animation that caused her eyes to brighten. "Can Ada forget that you fought in the battle where Tarleton's troopers rode her father down—that you followed close behind that scourge of our Carolinian homes, and shouted victory when the fight was ended? Ask her to forget that I love her dearly, when you ask her to blot from her remembrance what you are and where you fought."

The soldier did not reply, but looked at his companions with a meaningful smile.

In a small room directly overhead stood Ada Heath viewing her pale face in the mirror. She had brushed her beautiful hair back from her temples with hands white as snow, and her toilet, made since her departure from the room below, was plain and neat.

A pleasant breeze stole into the room by the open window and fanned the pale cheeks of the widow's daughter. Once she stole to the window and looked out. The evening star illumined the western horizon, and the stillness of the grave seemed to dwell with it there.

It was a terrible moment in Ada Heath's young life.

He who waited for her in the room below was her betrothed. It was a strange betrothal—a patriot girl to an officer in Tarleton's infamous command; but this is how it came about:

The Heath cottage stood in the midst of a beautiful Carolina district overrun by the British and their Tory allies. Abner Heath was a patriot who drew his sword when Sumter rose into the district and called for volunteers. But his services to Liberty were of brief duration; he fell in a battle while fighting gallantly, and left his cottage to the mercy of the foe. After the conflict the Tories plundered and burned without mercy, and the patriot's home was marked for destruction. But Roger Donald, a captain in Tarleton's legion, wrested it from the fiends, and received the grateful thanks of the widow and her child.

He did more than this. He obtained from Tarleton an order against the harming of the already blasted home, and took good care to impress upon Ada that he was her benefactor.

Often did he ride to the cottage after his act of mercy, and the inmates of the cottage were not long in divining his intention. He appeared as a suitor for Ada's hand—appeared thus when that gentle hand was promised to a young soldier who fought under Washington.

The captain was a persistent suitor, and the young girl did not dare repulse him. She told him about her lover fighting in the North, and almost before her words had ceased to quiver her lips there came startling news from the valley of the James.

Oliver Reynolds lay dead on the field of battle, and the man who rode to Ada's door, in a

faded Continental uniform, told her that with his own hands he had buried the young patriot beside the fair Virginian river!

With new zest Captain Donald pressed his suit. He almost threatened, for he said: "Reject me, Ada, and I many no longer protect, and there are men who itch to apply the torch to your home."

She thought of the heartbroken mother enfeebled by a slow-eating disease—of the little home endeared to her by the sweet memories that cluster around childhood—and then told the king's soldier that he could have the hand for which he sued.

"Promise me this," she said, "give me at least one chance. Promise me that if the freedom of the Colonies is assured before the wedding rites have been performed you will set me free."

He smiled at the strange request, and unhesitatingly promised.

Then the girl threw herself into her mother's arms, and told her that she had saved their little home by selling her hand, her happiness.

The reader may imagine with what anxiety mother and daughter watched the war from that hour; how they rejoiced when they heard of an American triumph, and how their hearts sunk within their breasts when the captain brought to the cottage tidings of British successes.

Thus, alternating between hope and fear, the tenants of the cottage watched the autumn days flit by.

At last the night appointed for the nuptials came, and to it they now return.

Mrs. Heath entertained her visitors, one of whom was a chaplain in a British regiment. Ada heard the murmur of voices in the room below her plain boudoir, and almost wished that she could never go below and greet the man who had ridden from the English camp to the wedding altar.

But, she could not keep him waiting forever, so, with an impulse, she turned her pallid face from the mirror and left the room.

Captain Donald greeted her appearance with a ceremonious welcome, and she was presented to his companions. In the mellow lamplight the pale girl looked very beautiful, and her eyes were full of pleas against the ceremony about to be performed.

The widow gazed on her daughter and then glanced at the man who had come to claim his bride.

His eyes were ablaze with triumph, and when with an exclamation complimentary of Ada's loveliness, she rose to her feet, and her feeble hand fell on his arm.

"So you are in earnest?" she said, looking into his face.

"Certainly, Mrs. Heath! Did you suppose that I would bring a British minister to your house if I did not intend to make Ada my wife? Madam, this is a drama in real life!"

The grief-stricken mother groaned, and looked at her child.

"Ada, I cannot give you up to this man," she said. "Tell him no! My days will soon end, then—"

"Mother, I have said that beneath this roof you shall die in peace," Ada said, interrupting, as she approached her mother. "Were I to refuse that man at this moment you would soon be without a home, and I without your love. No! no! I will keep my promise."

There was a feeble cry and the widow tottered back to sink into the arm-chair with a groan that went to Ada's heart like a knife.

"Quick!" she cried to the British captain. "Do not let her see me become your wife! Let the chaplain do his duty!"

She arose at her betrothed's side as she spoke, and her trembling hand was on his arm.

Then, with the fainting widow in the chair, the daughter prepared for the sacrifice of her happiness. The lamp lent a dim light to the scene, and the beating of hearts seemed to be heard.

It was a silent moment when the English chaplain, bending over the lamp, opened the little form-book of the church of his native isle.

Ada Heath, standing at the soldier's side, did not see the chaplain; she did not see a single occupant of the room, for she was listening, not for the words of the marriage ceremony, but to a sound like the shout of a distant man.

All at once the chaplain heard it, and looked at Captain Donald.

Nearer and nearer came the cry, and when it could no longer be doubted that it was a man's voice, the bridegroom with a pale face said to the witness:



## A TWILIGHT MEMORY.

BY EREN E. REXFORD.

The twilight drops her curtains  
About the shadowy world;  
And the banners of the sunset  
Above the West are furled.  
Come sit beside me, dear one,  
And sing some plaintive old  
Some plaintive little ballad,  
About the streets of gold.

To-night, while sunset glories  
Hung flaming o'er the hill,  
I listened to the robins  
And lonesome whippoorwill.  
And I lived an evening over,  
When the robins sang the same,  
And the light of heaven seemed shining,  
Through the sunset gates of flame.

Then I saw the shadows gather  
In the corners of the room,  
But they could not hide one shadow,  
That was full of awful gloom.  
For a dear one's bark was drifting  
Out upon the unknown sea—  
In the falling twilight shadows,  
Drifting out from earth and me.

Oh! the sad voiced, mournful robin!  
Were they thinking of my pain  
That their song should be so mournful?  
I can hear them sing again!  
And I hear the plaintive calling  
Of the whippoorwill once more,  
As my dear one's bark goes drifting  
Toward the far-off heaven shore!

Sing some ballad in the twilight,  
Tuning weary eyes with balm;  
Sing of the celestial city,  
Wrapped forever more with calm.  
Sing of rest and dear ones waiting,  
Over there for you and me,  
When our bark goes drifting, drifting,  
Out into eternity.

## Great Adventurers.

COLUMBUS,  
Discoverer of the New World.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

THE adventures and experiences of the early discoverers of America are so romantic as to read like romance. After Columbus had proclaimed his great success in finding a New World thickly peopled with a race of red men, whose land was of glorious beauty, and rich in precious stones and metals, it excited to fever-heat the spirit of adventure, exploration and conquest among the several powers of Western Europe. Each nation was eager to possess a portion of the new domain; and, ere four years had passed, various fleets were afloat on voyages of discovery. Their successes and failures filled Europe with excitement. The civilization found by the Spaniards in Mexico and Peru; the bloody conquest of those countries by Cortez and Pizarro; the enormous wealth obtained by them and their followers—so served to intensify the thirst for adventure, and the lust for gold among English, French, Portuguese, Venetians and Dutch, that the 16th century witnessed marvelous deeds of men and stupendous schemes of nations for aggrandizement and power.

Christopher Columbus—or Christopher Colon as he called himself when he went to Spain—was born at Cogolito, in Genoa, A. D. 1436. His father being a well-to-do tradesman, Christopher received an excellent education for those days—then a rare exception even among "the gentry." His taste ran so decidedly to navigation that he left the University of Pavia to become a practical sailor; and this love for the sea and for adventure took such possession of him that when he was three-and-twenty years of age it was his "ruling passion." He voyaged to all the ports of the Mediterranean. Then he ran down the only half-known African coast, and out to the newly-discovered islands of the ocean. He stretched away to the Northern Ocean, to Iceland and beyond, resolved to discover new lands. His learning and observation convinced him of the existence of other continents, and his eager mind gathered strength of purpose with each new voyage. To further his studies and schemes he tarried in Portugal, on whose shores he was cast by the destruction of his vessel by a Venetian galley. With the aid of an oar he swam two leagues to the land and made his way to the court of Alfonso V., at Lisbon.

The Portuguese then were famed for their commercial enterprise and sea adventures. They welcomed men of all nations who had nautical knowledge or were possessed of the spirit of adventure. Under the Portuguese flag he made voyages to all the then newly-found lands. Marrying the daughter of Pedro, a celebrated sea captain, from this old sailor's logs, charts and reports he obtained much strange and exciting information. His brother-in-law, then engaged in the public service, notified him that western winds had driven ashore at Porto Santo wood which showed signs of man's rude handicraft, and canes of immense size. The same reports came from the Azores, Madeira and Cape Verde Islands; then, on the Azores, two dead bodies of men, differing wholly from the European or African races, floated ashore.

All served to confirm Columbus' long-growing convictions of a Western land—or possibly of India, which might reach so far to the east that its eastern limits would be found by sailing west. The sphericity of our world was not then admitted, but Columbus, having studied deeply the problems of Astronomy, and observed the phenomena of the earth's shadow in lunar eclipses, became thoroughly convinced of the fact that the earth was a globe, and that, by sailing west, he would strike the eastern limit of the Asiatic continent, or discover new lands lying between.

So to King John II., the King of Portugal, he broached his ideas and designs, soliciting his aid in fitting out an expedition to solve the problem. John did not accede to the Genoese's suggestion, but was so favorably impressed that he gave private orders for a ship, bound to the Cape de Verde Islands, to continue on to the west, until land was found.

This effort to anticipate him impelled Columbus to go in person to the rival court, of Spain, (Castile), where Ferdinand and Isabella reigned. At the same time he sent his brother Bartholomew to England, to interest King Henry VII. in the scheme.

Then followed, for the Genoese, seven years of severest labor, trial and mortification in the endeavor to obtain the confidence of those high in authority, and the support of the crown. His ideas were pronounced visionary; his belief in the sphericity of the world was declared to be both absurd and irreverent. A few good and wise men sustained him and labored in his interest with the court, but, after seven years of waiting, he abandoned hope and sadly departed for the court of Louis of France.

This so aroused his friends that Isabella dispatched messengers for his recall. He obtained the coveted audience and so interested the

queen that she volunteered her jewels to obtain the money necessary for the adventure. He was commissioned admiral, and viceroy of all lands he should discover and annex to the Spanish crown, and with a fleet of three small vessels—two of them mere caravels—he sailed from Palos, Spain, Aug. 3d, 1492.

The Canary Islands, however, were the real point of departure. From thence, Sept. 6th, the great navigator entered upon unknown seas, greatly to the terror of many of his crews. Only Columbus' confident assertions reassured them. Even his captains were soon filled with fear at the phenomenon of the great variations of the magnetic needle, and were reconciled to the unheard-of deflection of the magnet by Columbus' explanation that it was caused by the diurnal suction of the north (polar) star around the north pole!

In a few days the little ship were in the midst of the "Saragossa sea"—a floating mass of marine plants, over which hovered many unknown aquatic birds. These signs of land increased as the fleet sailed west, but no land appearing, the crews became excited, and mutinous for a return. The admiral, by every power of persuasion, threat and command, was barely able to keep the ships on their course. Signs of land multiplied rapidly. Flocks of small land-birds were not infrequent. Then appeared floating debris of land origin, and on the morning of October 11th indications of land became so strong that caution was enjoined on the pilots.

That night Columbus' watchful eyes detected a moving light, and at 2 A. M., Oct. 12th, the land was seen, two leagues away. A gun was fired to announce the discovery. The three vessels came together, and with the dawn they lay before their eager eyes a low but very beautiful island, thick clad in verdure, with limpid rivulets discernible on its surface. Great rejoicing followed. The *Te Deum* was sung by all—Columbus leading. Before it was finished the island shores were alive with men, women and children, amazed spectators of the wonderful scene.

Columbus and his captains, with an armed guard, landed. As they touched the shore all fell down, and, kissing the soil, uttered fervent thanks to God. The royal standard was planted and the word *Salvador* pronounced as the name of the land—a fitting recognition of the divine Savior. The company present hailed Columbus as viceroy of the new domain, and on the spot took the oath of allegiance.

The islanders, at first frightened away by the approach of the boats, now began to return. Finding no harm done them, they came forward, and by signs of abject humility gave token of their submission. They regarded the new-comers as something immortal, to be obeyed and worshiped.

After a two days' tarry, the vessels proceeded, with a few natives on board, in quest of other lands, and discovered, in rapid succession, the islands south of San Salvador. October 27th, just at sunset, Cuba was sighted, and the next morning it was formally possessed, in the name of the crown of Spain, and christened *Juana*, after Prince Don Juan. Here evidences of a higher civilization were found in the shape of huts having fireplaces in them; bone fish-hooks, various utensils, weapons, cotton cloth, etc. Explorations followed, and an embassy was sent into the interior of the island. The word uttered by the natives, *Cubanacan*, so impressed Columbus that he interpreted it *Great Khan* and concluded he had indeed discovered "farther Ind." To the *Khan* he therefore wrote by his embassy, which, however, returned after a twelve miles' tramp to report no cities found, nor any evidence of the Great Khan.

Columbus now spent many weeks in his explorations. St. Domingo was nearly circumnavigated and other adjacent islands entered on his charts. He believed that he really had struck India, and he expected ere long to rediscover Marco Polo's great island of *Cipango* (Japan), where were untold treasures of gold and precious stones. The harmless Indians, with their splendid canoes and cactuses (chiefs) in command, encouraged this illusion, while the remarkable products of the land—tobacco, potatoes, yams, cassava, etc., all strange to him, added no little to his delight. On Cuba, St. Domingo, etc., the natives wore and wore a coarse cotton cloth, dyed with various colors, which betokened, as Columbus thought, a contact with India civilization.

We must remember that the great navigator was literally groping his way. The *wish* was to find India, for then he could prove his theory of the sphericity of the world, and thus solve numberless important problems. So he tried hard to associate what he saw with what Marco Polo had published regarding "Cathay," but his new world proved, after much exploration and inquiry among the natives, to be but great islands, with vast seas beyond.

Having lost his own vessel, the largest of his fleet, by running on a reef off of Hayti, the admiral determined upon a return to Spain in the small caravel or barque—the second vessel having long before run away from the fleet to explore on its own account. The wrecked ship was broken to pieces and a strong fort erected with its timbers; then, leaving in it a volunteer garrison of 39 men, he set sail for Spain, Jan. 4th, 1493. The second day out he met his second vessel returning from its independent cruise, and accepting the captain's excuses for his treacherous conduct, he continued on his way—reaching Palos, after great peril, March 15th.

His reception was noisy with cannon and the shouts of the people, and his trip to the court at Barcelona one continued triumph. He bore with him several of the natives and many of the products of the New World—the *West Indus*, as he called it. A chair next to the throne was given him, and then, in the presence of the court, he related to the queen and king (Isabella and Ferdinand) the story of his adventures and discoveries—at the same time delivering a considerable amount of gold which he had obtained by barter with the natives. For all of which he was made a Grandee and every mark of royal favor lavished upon him.

A second voyage followed, under highly favorable auspices, with three fine ships and fourteen caravels, bearing fifteen hundred men. Leaving Cadiz September 25th, 1493, he reached Hispaniola (Hayti) November 24, to find his fort abandoned and his colony dispersed. He rebuilt the fort, and made a fortified town, which he named Isabella, appointing his brother Diego governor. This done he proceeded with his explorations and added a number of islands to his charts. Returning to Isabella, after an absence of five months, he found there, to his great delight, his long-lost brother Bartholomew, whom the queen had dispatched with additional supplies for the colony. Columbus was angered and mortified, however, to find great discord and discontent among the colonists, who, instead of securing gold in plenty, as every one of the adventurers had expected, had encountered only work and the hardships incident to settlement life. Complaints against the admiral, and denunciations of the country, already had been dispatched to Spain. To silence

calumny he returned to Spain with considerable treasure and thirty natives—leaving Bartholomew in command. His presence in Spain disconcerted but did not silence his calumniators, and it was not until May 30th, 1498, that he started on his third voyage, with six vessels. Three were sent direct to Hispaniola, while, with the others, he took a more southerly course. He struck the continent at Trinidad and coasted along to the north until convinced that he had indeed found a New World. Then he returned to Hispaniola, where he proposed to found a great viceroyalty of which Spain should be proud.

But his enemies were busy enough at court. Isabella, frightened at the report of his purpose to found an independency, dispatched Bobadilla to Hispaniola, with the powers of viceroy. The great admiral and his two brothers, on Bobadilla's arrival, were put in irons and sent to Spain with all manner of charges against them by personal enemies. His appearance in irons (Nov., 1500) aroused public sympathy. He was released at once and received at court with distinguished honor, by Isabella's commands.

But, intrigue was at work to rob him of his viceroyalty and his honors, and he and his friends labored in vain for his restoration. Falling in this, he started, March 9, 1502, on a new voyage of discovery, to try to make his way through to the East Indies. Stopping at St. Domingo (Hispaniola) he was denied permission to enter port! He continued on to Darien, but failed to find the expected "opening." Two of his vessels were lost in this exploration, and, proceeding east, on his return, the two remaining vessels were wrecked off Jamaica, and the great navigator barely escaped with his life.

Alone on the island, with no means of escape, his condition was forlorn enough. Through the kindness of the natives two canoes were obtained, in which several of the boldest of his men embarked, to try and reach Hispaniola, and from thence bring him succor. The natives became hostile, owing to the misconduct of the Spaniards, and starvation threatened the hapless castaways. Columbus only saved his command by strategy. Knowing that an eclipse of the moon was at hand, he threatened the natives with the vengeance of his God if they did not bring in bountiful supplies of provisions, and said, in proof of his threat, that at a certain hour the moon would lose its light. The observation came, greatly to their consternation, and food poured in plentifully from that hour.

A whole year passed before relief came. The two canoes, strange to say, reached St. Domingo in safety, but the governor refused to act, and the men and their friends equipped a small vessel for the admiral's relief. In that little barque he left Jamaica (June 28th, 1504), and in the same craft made his way back to Spain, shattered in health, robbed of his viceroyalty and his vast estates in the New World, and died, of a broken spirit, at Valladolid, May 20th, 1506.

Great honors were shown the remains of the man who had done so much for Spain and been so deeply wronged by the selfish Ferdinand. Buried temporarily in Seville, his body, by his own expressed will, was taken to St. Domingo to rest in the world his genius had evoked from the darkness. There it rested until transferred to Havana, Cuba, in January, 1796, and with imposing pomp was buried at the right side of the great altar of the cathedral. There it yet reposes.

Brave Barbara:  
OR,  
FIRST LOVE OR NO LOVE.  
A STORY OF A WAYWARD HEART.BY CORINNE CUSHMAN,  
AUTHOR OF "BLACK EYES AND BLUE," ETC.  
CHAPTER VII.

THE BUTTERFLY IN THE WEB.

LITTLE Lady Alice had a pleasant visit at Dunleath Castle. No mother could be kinder to her than was the proud countess. She was only a child—little Alice—a dainty, happy-hearted, bright-haired child of sixteen summers, with all the deeper feelings of womanhood still asleep in her folded nature. She liked simple amusements, confectionery, petting and new dresses, and she had been kept on scant allowance of any of these charming things the last few years. Her father was too deeply absorbed in himself and his embarrassments to pet his only remaining child; and money was too precious to him to be wasted on sweets for her; while, as for clothing, a sufficiency of the cheap dresses was all the girl ever had.

"But you are old enough to dress very differently now, dear; and your father has given me *carte blanche* to put your wardrobe in order. Perhaps you will be in society this coming winter, and then you will need a great many things."

The countess had said this to her, and followed it up by sending to London very frequently for boxes of pretty articles of the toilet; and little Alice, delighted, and wondering at her papa's liberality, after his being so close with her, accepted everything as coming from him, and took unbounded pleasure in her new treasures. Laces and gloves, sacks, ribbons, hats, a blue silk dress, a white grenadine, any number of satin and organza dresses, fans, bouquet-holders, opera-glasses, *bijouterie*—all these things remarkably conducive to the happiness of a very young lady! Lady Alice took the deeper delight in hers because she had not hitherto been so fortunate.

After all, it was the delight of a child in beautiful things. She had no coquettish ideas of conquest or display. It was very quiet at Dunleath. There were none to coquet with had she been so disposed; and she did not miss admirers, or yearn after them. She thought the place almost too grand for her humble little self—wondered at the deferential air of the waiting-maid the countess had appointed her personal attendant—enjoyed the lovely environments of Dunleath, its lawns, forests, flower-gardens, fountains, lakes. And she never ceased to be surprised at the great kindness of the lady of Dunleath. Her heart warmed with gratitude and admiration, but not with love. She could never quite love the stately countess who did so much for her—never pour out her heart to her as she used to her own mamma. Yet she thought her the handsomest lady, and the best, and the most queenly she had ever seen.

She never dreamed—poor child, how could she?—that all this goodness, at which her own generous little heart swelled with gratitude, was but the bait with which the simple fish is caught on the cruel hook.

The haughty Countess of Dunleath, knowing that no girl who knew of her son's affliction would marry him, was deliberately working to entangle this innocent young creature in an alliance with him.

She had made her choice after due deliberation. Of course, some young lady might have married the heir, for his title; but such a woman would be selfish, and probably as coarse-grained as she was unprincipled.

Now, the little Alice, although poor "as a church-mouse," was nobly born and bred, of the daintiest refinement, beautiful, young, loving, amiable—just the girl to make her poor son happy the few years he had to live.

As to the happiness of the poor girl herself!—ah! the lady countess did not make so nice a calculation on that! She said to herself, however—for she was not so utterly selfish as she was wrapped up in her son—that the child would have much to gain, for, if not of the world, she would have a home, and that she would, if not happy with Herbert, in all probability be left a widow while yet so young as to make a second choice.

The physicians had assured her that Herbert would not live more than five or six years at the longest. At the end of six years Lady Alice would be only a little over twenty-two.

And so the countess planned and plotted, nor called herself any hard names for doing so.

She quietly put aside all the unpleasant fancies of the effect years spent with a husband so frightfully afflicted might have on the nerves and heart of a sensitive young thing like Lady Alice. All she considered was to get a wife who could charm and entertain her son; and who, by giving him an heir, would thus dispossess the cousin who anticipated the earlship.

If it was heartless of her to thus seek to entrap Lady Alice, what can be said of the child's own father, who entered fully into the plan, and was more than willing to sell his daughter to a husband like the earl?

And what did little Alice, all this time, think of the earl? Her heart was still an unfolded bud. She learned to have a great affection for him as a friend and companion.

Love, with his wondrous magic wand, had not yet touched the hidden flower of her soul, causing it to burst into sudden, exquisite bloom. No. All the woman's part of her nature still slumbered, as the Sleeping Beauty slumbered in the enchanted palace, nor was the young earl the Fairy Prince who ought to kiss her eyelids into opening.

The earl's mysterious malady, whatever it might be, excited her compassion, making her doubly kind to him and anxious to please him. She thought him very handsome, *but not very bright*—and sometimes his fits of temper disconcerted, even shocked her. She liked his society because young people do like each other's society, and he was the only person about the castle anywhere near her own age. She forgave his bursts of violence, because he was often ill, and was a great sufferer from some nervous disease. She sometimes wondered at his *forgetting things* which had happened only the day before. In fact, there were many things about him which puzzled her; which, if she had been older and wiser, she would have understood better. And these things effectively prevented her from falling madly in love with Herbert, as his mother had hoped and expected her to do.

She had made some inquiries, at first, of the maid who waited on her, as to the peculiar form of the earl's malady; but the girl had received her instructions, and gave a very indefinite answer.

She then asked her father, who also turned the question off with something about its "being merely a nervous affection," which the young gentleman would gradually outgrow.

Outgrow! yes, by outgrowing life itself—and the father, knowing all the terrible facts, deliberately deceived his child.

High-minded and high-bred, Lady Alice asked no more questions.

More than once she observed something peculiar in the haste with which the countess turned her out of Herbert's presence. She was too quick-witted not to perceive that there was something kept from her. But she was also too ignorant of such things to form any idea of what the nature of the trouble was.

And so the six weeks of her visit ran on toward the close. She began to dread the thoughts of returning to London and living in some cheerless hotel with her father, who scarcely paid any more attention to her than to the canary bird in its cage by the window; and who seemed to consider that he did his whole duty by her when he secured as her companion—half waiting-maid and half *duenna*—a meagerly paid, sour, unbending elderly person, as respectable as she was uncompanionable to the poor little creature who would fain be gay and happy if she could.

Lady Alice began to dread her return to this sort of life, and to cherish every hour of her remaining days at Dunleath; every friendly chat with Herbert, every game of parlour-quet, or backgammon, or conversation-cards, or cribbage played with him in his room.

Herbert made her cry, two or three times, by himself shedding tears as he told her how he should miss her. She cried out of sympathy; and yet she felt the loss of something manly in his half-whining tone and childish complaints.

One lovely day, in the sixth week of her visit, she sat in the rose-garden, a book in her hand, but not reading. She was looking with loving eyes at the dark roses, the glittering fountain, the green, soft turf beyond, the great pile of gray buildings rising out of the grass and flowers, with ivy clambering to its turrets, and its tower gilded by the declining sun—Dunleath Castle!—at the glimmering glass of long conservatories and grape-tries, at the apricots on the wall; the vistas of beautiful woods and waters beyond.

"Oh, oh!" thought Lady Alice, her velvet cheek dropping into her lily hand, "if I had a home like this, it would be living in Paradise without waiting to go to heaven! How strange it seems that papa, who is of such good birth, should be so poor! I would like to live here always."

"Yes, I wish this were my home," she repeated aloud, unconscious of any listener.

At this moment the countess, gliding among the rose-trees, reached the bench where her young guest sat, and, placing herself beside her, took in both of hers one of the little hands.

"It is a beautiful place," she said, earnestly, looking about, and then down into the frank, shy brown eyes of the young creature whose hand she held. "Alice, my dear child, you have but to consent to it, and I shall be your home, your very own home, always."

"Consent to it, my lady?" murmured Alice, returning her smiling look with one of surprise.

"Yes, dear, consent to something which I trust you will not find it so hard to do."

"To part from papa, perhaps?" questioned the child, smiling in return, yet shrinking a little, for she was more faithful to her selfish parent than he was to her. "You are very, very kind, my lady—yet it would hardly be right to desert poor papa. He has no one to love him but his little daughter."

"Lord Ross is quite as anxious as we are, dear Alice, that you will like the proposition I have to make to you. You do not at all infer what it is?"

"Not at all, my lady," answered Alice, flushing prettily under the bright eyes which always seemed to pierce through her, albeit they were always so kind.

Nor did she infer what was coming. Vague thoughts that the Countess of Dunleath, having no daughter, might offer to adopt her, flitted across her mental vision.

"How could I expect that you would, you are such a child, little Alice! Yet you are a woman, too, my dear; and you have your future to think of. I must ask of you to think very seriously of it now. Herbert has asked me to speak to you"—Alice started, and the sweet face which had grown so rosy grew pale—"for him, my dear. He has grown very fond of you. He cannot endure the prospect of your going away from us."

"In short, Lady Alice Ross, my son loves you, and asks you to become his wife."

The firm clasp of the elder lady closed tighter on the poor little yielding hand of the younger, holding it fast.

"Loves me! The earl's wife! Why, how absurd!" stammered the girl, trying to draw her hand away.

"Not absurd, dear Alice—only very natural. How could he help falling in love with you, in all these weeks when your society has been his only pleasure? He has had a fair opportunity to learn to prize you—and so we all have. I have never seen any one I should like so thoroughly for a daughter."

"Oh, madame, you are too good to me," murmured Alice, trembling.

"Why are you so agitated? Do you not love Herbert, as he does you? You have seemed to care for him."

"Ah, and so I do, dear countess. Herbert is like a brother to me. I am very, very fond of him—and so sorry for him, too, shut up in his room so much. But I never thought of being his—of marriage. Why! I am so very young, my lady!—not seventeen!"

"I know it, my child. But I am a believer in early marriages. I have observed that they are generally the happiest. Before the character of either has fully hardened—while it is still possible for each to yield and assimilate—is the time, for young people to unite. You may consider it an act of self-denial to marry one so much of an invalid—"

"Oh, my lady, it is not that. I should never care for that!"

"Then—do not you love my boy—my beautiful Herbert? I have hoped that you would, before this."

"I don't think I know anything about love—of that kind, my lady. I have never thought of marriage, except as something so far off—so very distant—I really—"

The countess laughed.

"Come now, my dear daughter, I shall tell Herbert that you consent to an engagement, shall I not? Of course you do not understand your own heart, little one. Let me read it for you. I am wiser than you, for I have lived through all. You own that you are fond of Herbert. That is quite enough to begin on. Try to love him a little more every day. Marry him, before long; and as his wife you will find love come to you unsought."

"Papa could never spare me," cried Alice, more and more alarmed.

"You mistake. He has admitted to me that it would be the greatest possible comfort to him to know that you were provided for. Look about you, my child! You will be mistress of all this that you see—of a palace in London—of other castles and domains as fair as these. You are poor, and Lord Ross is in debt and trouble. It would lighten his cares immensely, to leave you here, the lady of Dunleath."

"Has papa really said that he wanted me to—"

"To marry Herbert?"

"His heart is set on it, Alice. And so is mine—to say nothing of my boy's. Surely, you are not going to disappoint us all?"

"I must have time to think, if you please," said the poor child, confused, startled, not unflattered, perhaps, by the proud lady's wooing, yet finding herself, curiously, far more unhappy than happy at the prospect.

"Certainly; take plenty of time in making up your mind; talk with your father; and let Herbert say what he can to persuade you. Will you go in and see Herbert now, dear?"

"Oh, not to-day, please! Wait until to-morrow. I may go to my own room now, may I not, dear countess?"

"Yes, child. The dressing-bell will ring before long. Try and come down to dinner. Your father will miss you, else; and I know that he will desire to talk with you this evening."

As the ladies rose to go toward the house, some one approached through an alley of fast-fading roses—the last of the superb collection which would bloom out-of-doors that year—paused at a little distance, and lifted his hat to the countess.

"Delorme Dunleath!" exclaimed the mistress of the castle, in far greater astonishment than pleasure.

Then, controlling her surprise and her vexation under the cover of a cold courtesy, she advanced and gave him her hand.

For three minutes little Alice stood there unnoticed—three minutes, crowded with destiny!—and in that brief space the bud burst into bloom—became a rose—the child expanded into the woman—and she knew that she did not—never could—love Herbert, though he were a thousand times an earl.

How had this knowledge come to her?

It was simply by looking at this new-comer that the change came. She had seen a man that she could love, and it taught her that she could not love the other!

Ah! how like a revelation do these things come—blinding with the swift flash of light, but none the less sure and lasting because the consciousness comes so suddenly.

Before the stately countess could turn to present her, little Alice had fled to the seclusion of her room as the fawn flies to the deepest covert of the wood.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## LIGHTNING OUT OF A CLEAR SKY.

Two or three weeks passed swiftly away at Bellevue. Barbara allowed the young friends who were visiting her to go home, when the various terms of their invitations had expired, without any urging of them to remain. She was so happy in Delorme's society that she craved no other. Her whole heart was now given to this man. All her willful, imperious ways were softened before him.

If, at times, she doubted him, the doubt only increased the abandon of her gift to her lover of her young hopes and dreams. She said many times to herself:

"If I should find out anything wrong about him now, it would be too late. It would kill me to lose him! And why do I fear? Is not papa old and wise enough to select a husband for me? Papa loves Delorme like a son. Papa knows all."

Yet sometimes she was devoured by a hungry curiosity to know those events in her

\*We adopted Lamartine's date. Gooderich says 1446; Blackie's Encyclopedia, 1435, etc., etc.

lover's past life which he had confided to her father, but not to her. If her father were satisfied, would not she be, too? Why did they not speak freely to her? One hundred times a day her thoughts would go back to that assurance of Delorme's that she was his first, his only love. If she could doubt his word in that, she must in all things.

"He would not tell me an open falsehood," she assured herself.

Her aunt Margaret liked Delorme, too. That old lady was fanciful in her likes and dislikes, bitter in her prejudices. It was a great triumph to Barbara to have her take kindly to Delorme.

Aunt Margaret Harlenberg was an old maid of sixty years. She had once been as beautiful, high-spirited, proud and coquettish as her lovely niece—much such a girl, in fact; and she had broken with her lover in a fit of jealousy—had found out, too late, that she was in the wrong—and had never married. Being rich as well as handsome, she had been sought by many men, up to her fiftieth year; she had laughed at them all, and lived on, in her own way, growing more odd, high-tempered, and prejudiced, as the years went by.

She had left her own house, twenty miles further up the river, and hurried down to Bellevue the day that a rumor reached her that her niece had a suitor.

She felt it incumbent on her to take a leading part in anything so important as Barbara's choosing a husband.

She came down to Bellevue, as we have seen, and she fell in love with the English gentleman to whom her niece had plighted her troth. Whether he reminded her of her own first love—long ago mouldering in his grave—or whether it was simply that Delorme could charm wherever he chose, she became his ardent admirer, praising him to everybody and promising her niece all her plate and jewelry, when she should herself no longer want them.

This was wornwood to Herman.

He had hoped to have his aunt on his side. Instead of that, she treated him almost with contempt, because he had again and again returned to his attacks on the character of Delorme. She did not mince words; it was not her way.

"If you really know anything, Herman, do speak out! Don't stab a man in the back. That's not like a Rensselaer, to slander a man in secret. I see through it all. It's jealousy. You were such a fool as to hope to get Barbara yourself. Why, she wouldn't look at you! Not but what you are well enough, Herman, in your way—sensible, steady-going, young man, to whom I shall leave a few thousand dollars, when I die, if you continue to behave yourself—but not Barbara's mate! Come! give up this backbiting, and be good-natured about what you have no power to prevent!"

"Oh! haven't I?" muttered Herman, between wrathful lips; but not so that his aunt could hear him. He had built too much on the "few thousand dollars" she had promised him, to dare to offend her. "No power to prevent! That may be a mistake of yours, aunt Margaret. I rather think that doughty milord in disguise would tremble in his shoes if he even suspected what I know and what I am doing. Confound it! I wish it did not take so long to send to England for those documents! The lady has promised they shall be here within six weeks. Then, we will see who is the most becoming match for my proud cousin—an honest man, whom she knows, or a scoundrel, and a stranger, who has fled from his own country, to make a victim of some heiress here."

As to Delorme, he was happier than he had been in years—happier than he had thought ever to be again—as happy as a man circumstanced as he was could be. From whatever motive he had first sought the heiress of Bellevue, he was dead in love with her now.

In her delicious company he forgot everything but that she loved him and had promised to be his; but, alas! when alone, when he had time to reflect, a brooding, nervous fear took hold of him and shook him with a mortal terror—the terror that Barbara might hear something to destroy her faith in him and convince her that he had told her a falsehood when he assured her that she was his first, only love.

So more than a fortnight fled by. In that time Delorme had not once seen or heard of the woman whose one appearance—unheralded and unexpected—on the stage of his affairs began to seem to him like a dream. Sometimes he actually doubted that Mrs. Courtenay had come from England and he had met and talked with her.

Herman Rensselaer could have told him it was no dream. He knew where Mrs. Courtenay was, and what doing. He had held as many as four or five interviews with her.

One evening the whole family was assembled in the back drawing-room. For a wonder, there was no company. It was late in September now; and the spacious room, with its rich furniture and decorations, was doubly cheerful from the light not only of plentiful lamps, but of a blazing wood-fire on the hearth.

Peter Rensselaer believed in fireplaces—an open fire was to him the very nucleus of home-comfort, the core, the heart of home itself. The light of this one played cheerily over the heavy carvings of the rosewood mantel, the subdued tints of the velvet carpet, over the tasteful and sumptuous furnishings of the room, and over the faces of its occupants.

A table was drawn not far from it; at this table sat Herman, apparently deeply occupied with some accounts. Old Peter Rensselaer was frowning his slippers and reading the evening paper. Aunt Margaret sat at the same table with her nephew, busy with some intricate piece of knitting-work; but not so busy that her tongue was ever ready to utter some sharp remark when occasion offered.

Herman, affecting to be absorbed in his ledgers, was really watching the betrothed pair, in a way that would have spoiled their unconscious pleasure had they been aware of it. There was a gloomy scowl on his brows and beneath them his eyes glowed with an evil light of jealousy, hate, ungenerous triumph.

The lovers were at the piano. Delorme, who had a magnificent voice, had been singing a passionate love-song which had brought the hidden roses to the surface in Barbara's cheeks. Her dark skin, with its clear pallor, was like the velvet vellum which appears to be blank; yet warm it, and out come the ardent poems which are written on it. Warm Barbara's heart and out on her face came eloquent blushes and speaking expressions which made it the sweetest face in the world to read. Delorme evidently thought so, as he leaned on the piano, his hand toying absently with the sheets of music lying there, his eyes fixed on the fair face, upturned to listen to the low voice which was saying things to deepen her color and intensify the light of her dark eyes.

The fitful, rising and falling glow of the fire fell over his tall, elegant figure, his earnest, refined face—tall over her slender, supple, girlish form, robed in garnet silk, her purple-black hair, her bright, upraised face, so sweet, so rapturous—the very sight of it turned the heart of her cousin into a hell of discontent.

The lovers had no idea that he was watching or listening—that his ear was strained to catch their careless words.

"I believe in the words of the song, Delisle," Barbara was saying; "that the only love worth having is first love. I would scorn a man's heart after half a dozen other girls had played foot-ball with it. And aren't you glad, Delisle, that I never even thought of any man as a hero until I met you?"

"All my heroes were book-heroes. It was not until—until—you know when, that I began to take the grand qualities of the superb fellows one reads about in novels and wrap them about a living, breathing man."

"Ah, Barbara, darling, for Heaven's sake don't make a hero out of me. I am anything else but a hero—a poor, fallacious, weak mortal. Yes, child! I sometimes think weaker than you are—for you have some strong characteristics for a girl of your age. You frighten me at times."

"Frighten you, Mr. Delorme?"

"Oh! I dare say you mean that you fear my furious temper," observed Barbara, with a flash of her dark eyes.

"No, I do not mean that, Barbara. I admire your temper. I should be more than willing to have my ears boxed by you! I do not care for insane women. But—"

"What, Delisle!—how can such a little goose as I am inspire awe?"

"Well, for instance, I should not like to see you jealous—"

"But I never will be, Delisle. How can I be jealous of you, when I am your first love, and you are never to admire any other girl but me? Do you expect to indulge in future flirtations, sir? Explain yourself," and she put on a bewitching air of pouting displeasure which made her lover steal one of her dimpled bands and press it again and again to his lips.

"I would be willing to ignore the existence of the whole sex, saving you," he said, rapturously.

It was only foolish lovers' talk, of no interest to any but themselves; it was mean of Herman to listen; but he strained his ear to catch every accent of what made him so wretched after he had overheard it.

His eyes burned balefully as they stole long glances at the handsome and happy lover who had robbed him of his cousin; he ground his teeth together; the long rows of figures which he was pretending to balance danced before his eyes.

"Scoundrel! Deceiver! Who would believe that he could look into his innocent, truthful face, and lie to her so! I cannot endure it. I will speak to her this very evening. I was going to wait until the documents came—but I cannot bear this! It is driving me wild."

"Barbara tells me that this man had confided his whole past life to her father. I do not think so. If he would tell her a deliberate falsehood, would he not deceive my uncle? Of course he would. Perhaps uncle excuses everything in the cousin of an earl! We Americans love to lick the shoes of patrician Englishmen."

"One thing is certain. I have it in my power to make Barbara break her engagement with him. I know my proud little cousin. She will be very angry. In the first white heat of her passion she will dismiss Delorme with contempt. I will be on the ground, ready to reap the after-benefits of her quarrel with him. All in good time I will urge my suit. She will not love me at first; but pique will prompt her to accept me. She will take me because she is angry with him. Very well. I shall be satisfied. I shall not give her long to repent—I shall insist on a hasty marriage. Ah! all is not lost yet!" and he smiled, even as his envious heart cramped to behold the soft looks interchanged between the lovers.

Suddenly Herman laid his account-book on the table, walked over to the piano and offered his arm to his cousin.

"If Mr. Delorme will excuse me for interrupting so pleasant a *tête-à-tête*, I will beg of you to walk on the piazza with me a few moments. Remember! I have not had much of your society recently, cousin Barbara; and I desire to consult you about something of importance, or I should not be so rude."

Delorme bowed politely. It puzzled him, but it hardly troubled him, that Herman should have so brusque an air and speak in so forced and formal a tone.

"Do not forget to have a shawl before you go out in the cold air, Barbara," he said, kindly, as she took Herman's arm.

"I will see that my cousin does not run any risk," answered Herman for her, as he took her up with him.

"Where are you going with Barbara?" asked aunt Margaret, as the two passed her, looking up sharply from her knitting.

"Only on the piazza a few moments—to look at the moon."

"Let me beg of you not to become moonstruck. What! do they leave you out?" she asked of Delorme, who came over to her table and took a seat as he replied:

"I certainly was not invited. You must make yourself very entertaining, Miss Harlenberg, so that I shall not miss them."

They chatted away in an easy, friendly style for ten or fifteen minutes. The master of the house folded up his paper and joined in the conversation. The hickory brand on the gleaming brass fire-dogs fell apart and crumbled into glowing coals, sending a shower of sparks up the chimney.

Suddenly into the warm, splendid, shining room came Barbara. She brought a breath of the cold night-air with her. Herman did not return with her. She swept in alone and walked quickly up to within three paces of Delorme.

He looked up in surprise, and his face paled at the change in hers. Aunt Margaret and her father stared. A young girl, with blushing cheeks and dewy eyes, had gone out of the room—a young girl with a sunny face, full of coquetry, arch happiness, hope, the glory of love.

Then came back into it a girl looking five years older, white, stern, with a blasting, steely flash in her cold eyes that pierced like death to her lover's heart before she had spoken a word. Her slight figure seemed to have grown inches taller as she paused before her lover who stared up at her with the smile frozen on his paling face.

"Mr. Delorme, my cousin tells me that you were married nine years ago, and that you have a child eight years of age, living, and under a tutor's charge somewhere in England. Is this true?"

Her voice was scarcely more than a whisper, but it was the whisper of a wintry wind that passes over an ice-river. Delorme sprang to his feet; he tried to answer, but no sound came as he opened his lips. Her father hastened to answer for him.

"Barbara, I tell you Delorme has confided everything to me. Who has been talking to you? I will explain—"

"Hush, papa. All I want is for Delorme to say yes or no. Short words, easily spoken. Yes or no, Mr. Delorme?"

He looked wistfully, despairingly into the beautiful, stern eyes that never wavered.

"Barbara, I will tell you all—"

"Do not speak to me, except to answer, yes or no."

"Yes."

The word was wrenched from him by her commanding look.

"Barbara, my daughter, I tell you I will—"

"Papa, do not interfere. And the lady you married is still living, Mr. Delorme?"

A groan from the very depths of his heart was his reply.

"Yes or no?"

"Yes."

"And you have seen and talked with her since—since you spoke to papa about me?"

"Yes."

Very pale, proud and erect—as haughty as herself—she stood before her, and their two glances struck fire. He would not, at their tone and manner of hers, vouchsafe a word of explanation—nor would she have heard it. Again the excited old gentleman sought to make peace.

"My child, if you knew all, as I do—"

"Papa, I will not listen to you. Do not insult me by a word. There is nothing to be said. Whatever excuse Mr. Delorme may have for living apart from his wife, he has none for deceiving me. Papa, he told me a plain falsehood. I refuse ever to speak to him again. None of you need try to persuade me. I will not be annoyed even by the mention of his name. Our acquaintance is ended—forever!"

When that last sad word had dropped from her white lips she turned and swept out of the room with an air of unflinching majesty.

Betrothed—parted—broken-hearted at seventeen!

Alas! proud, unreasoning, exacting Barbara! Yet—is it any wonder that she would not pause for explanation?

(To be continued—commenced in No. 340.)

## LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

What is friendship? The union of two hearts that beat as one, without a throb of passion.

I asked the question as I musing sat  
Silent and lone;

And straightaway this answer came back to me:  
Nor sound, nor tone,

Only the sweet and solemn mystery  
That gave this quaint reply so hastily.

Friendship—so oft we hear it, as 'twere such  
Or such a thing;

Of which young maidens prate, wise ones declaim,  
And poets sing.

Strong, holy, pure and true, love's sweetest name,  
Or but a flatterer's breath, a transient flame.

What I am, and what I can freely give,  
As friend to friend;

Sweet interchange of thought, genial and true,  
Where warm hearts blend;

Good counsel, hopeful words and kindly deeds,  
With tender sympathies, life's daily needs.

Whom call we then our friends? Not always they  
Who chance to claim

A kinship with us, or may with us share  
A home and name;

They, rather, who our noblest thoughts attest,  
Can guide us, help us, understand us best.

Love giveth well—yet far more in return  
Ever demands;

And at the portal watches jealously,  
With outstretched hands,

Fearing to lose what it has never won,  
Warring with passion till at last undone.

It springs to life the blossom of an hour,  
Death and the grave;

With cheeks a bloom, unmeaning flatteries,  
And lover's sighs;

Seeming as sweet as fragrance that is blown  
From lily fields, or a harp's wandring tone.

True friendship wakens like some little seed  
Hid in the ground;

The tiny root, the stalk, the leaves, the flower,  
As years roll round.

Deeper and purer joys, with time, it brings,  
Then flies to heaven, at last, on angel wings.

Love that is lasting, that can challenge time,  
Is born of friendship—fond and deep and true—

Not as a slave;  
But, as a monarch ruling graciously,

Whose loyal subjects are forever free.

Giving, as one whose favors ever bring  
A boon is won.

Asking, yet ever the wish is well expressed,  
The boon is won.

Chiding, as were each sad reluctant word,  
Forgiveness and compassion deeply stirred.

Then, call it friendship if ye will, or love,  
From love such attributes as long endure;

For time, nor fate  
Can recompense two hearts that never knew

The joys congenial sympathies bestow.

And builders all who toil for happiness,  
You fabric raise;

From a foundation deep and strong and true,  
That year by year

Some added virtue and some greater good  
May fit you for a nobler brotherhood.

## Daisy May's Love Story.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THE old-fashioned double kitchen door stood wide open, and the strong sweet west wind poured through the big, sanded-floor room, stirring the feathery asparagus boughs, that hung, red-berried, over the high mantel shelf, and swaying in slow, graceful waves the blue muslin skirts of Daisy May's morning wrapper, as she stood beside the snowy pine table, arranging a pile of stemless flowers in a shallow glass dish, and displaying the neatest, smallest, highest-instepped feet, booted to perfection in buttoned pebble-gods.

Her bright, pliant face was bent caressingly over the fragrant hyacinths and early roses, and vivid rose-geranium leaves, and her eyes that were as blue as the June sky that was glowing like a gigantic sapphire over the fair country landscape, were dancing with exuberant delight as she realized that she was really and truly done with books and schools and everything but being at home with Aunt Mary and Uncle Joe, and having a dear, delightful time at picnics, and riding parties, and at boating and croquet, and with company and visiting. It was as if the golden gates of fairyland had been swung open by magic fingers, and the whole enchanted realm within were free for her to go in and conquer and reign.

It was perfectly natural that she should feel so. There never was a girl of seventeen, healthy, pretty, vivacious, that did not at the first emancipation from school books and short dresses, revel in the glorious anticipation of freedom, and the legitimate power of her charms and influence; and Daisy May, with her face as sweet as a flower, with its merry, dancing blue eyes, and hair that had red-gold tints among its long, lustrous, half-curling waves, with her complexion like cream-and-roses, and the prettiest, most witching mouth, and pearly teeth, and dimpled chin in the world, this merry, dainty girl, fresh from "Madame St. Santalle's Pensionnat de Demoiselles" in New York, was no exception to the rule that has governed, and will govern so many girls.

Just now, bending over the flowers that were scarce sweeter or fresher than her own lovely face, and inhaling their sweet fragrance so like her soft, pure breath, Aunt Mary came in, in big, portly, jolly Aunt Mary, than whom Daisy had never known another mother.

"At your flowers again? I declare, Daisy, country birth will out, won't it? I expect before long you'll be marrying some of these good-looking young farmers around here, and settling down as demure as if you never had been a mile away."

Aunt Mary sat down in the capacious cretonne-covered rocking chair and fanned herself with her sunbonnet, and Daisy looked up laughingly, as she disposed of the last blossom to her satisfaction, a creamy, yellow rosebud, against a vivid glowing crimson hyacinth. There was a naughty little gleam in her eyes, and quite an arching of her round white neck accompanied her answer.

"Indeed I'll never marry a farmer, auntie. I love the country well enough—here at home, where nothing but the poetry of it falls to me—gathering flowers, drinking creamy milk, hunting eggs when I feel like it, sketching shady spots, driving whenever I want to, and always sent luscious things to eat—and in winter sleigh rides, and singing schools, and plenty of books and my music."

"And Jack Maurice," Aunt Mary tacked the name very tersely at the end of the long list of attractions, then watched to see the effect on Daisy's face.

The pretty lips pouted charmingly.

"Jack Maurice! Oh, Jack's good enough, of course, but—"

Aunt Mary tacked leisurely.

"It's a good thing you have got over your childish attachment to him, Daisy, for he's going to be married soon. Engaged to one of the prettiest girls you ever saw—a Miss Winchester, visiting from Philadelphia, at Judge Castle-dean's."

Daisy's eyes grew a little darker, and then she elevated her eyebrows coldly.

"He is engaged, is he? Oh, well, that's perfectly natural, I am sure. I suppose Miss—Miss Winchester did you say?—I suppose she's a decided blonde, and petite?" Daisy didn't say that Jack Maurice had often sworn there was no other style of beauty for him but Daisy's own.

"Ah, bless you, no. Miss Winchester is tall—almost as tall as Jack, and very stately, and a lovely brunette. Everybody thinks Jack's a lucky fellow."

Daisy arose and took down her garden hat.

"I dare say he is—only I never could see who there was about them tall dark women to captivate any body. Auntie, I'm going over to Minnie Castle-dean's awhile—may I?"

Aunt Mary watched the petite, graceful figure in the navy-blue foulard cambric, and white tarlatan shade-hat tied over the clustering, floating curls, and nodded her head wisely, and smiled serenely, and went in to her baking.

And Daisy walked slowly along, half inclined to turn out of the path to Judge Castle-dean's handsome summer residence, and go off in the woods somewhere all by herself, half determined to go straight ahead and see this wonderful paragon of perfection who had consented to be Jack Maurice's wife.

Jack Maurice's wife! Somehow it seemed so strange—not that she really cared, oh! no—but because, two or three years ago, when she had been a bashful, sunbrowned youngster in short dresses, and Jack a gallant, handsome, barefooted lad, he had made her promise to be his wife some day, when he grew up, and saved some money, and had a farm.

And Daisy, lured by gifts of glossy-coated chestnuts, and the biggest bunches of grapes, and long rides on Jack's sled, had promised, with a coquettish little toss of her head.

Of course it had all been childish nonsense, too ridiculous to remember, and then with a straightening of her graceful little figure, and a curve of her lips intended to be the very essence of contempt for past silly childishness, Daisy walked in through the bronze gates of Castle Dean, and asked for Minnie, utterly ignoring the etiquette that insisted on Minnie's calling first on Daisy's return.

"You darling—you perfect old darling, to come to us! Daisy, I've been just dying to see you, and have you at home again. We're going to have the most jolly times this summer, you know. The house is full—and there is Nellie Winchester especially I want you to know, and the handsomest young officer on leave—Gus brought him up—Colonel Cressington; and we've impressed Jack Maurice—you remember Jack? He's the handsomest fellow around—beats the colonel, I tell you, and Nellie's just bewitched after him."

And Daisy laughed, and assented, and declared she half remembered Jack Maurice, and was dying to see Miss Winchester, and intended inaugurating a flirtation at once with the military gentleman.

Minnie rattled on, as seventeen-year-old girls have a way of doing.

"It's too bad Nellie's gone down to the city to-day to buy ribbon for the picnic—oh, you'll surely be on hand next Tuesday for our picnic at Eagle's Head, Daisy? I suppose Jack Maurice will take Nellie, and I am sure Colonel Cressington will be delighted to escort you."

"Colonel Cressington will be happier than ever before in his life if he may have that honor, Miss Minnie!"

Of course the girls started and expressed their surprise at that gentleman's sudden appearance, and then Minnie introduced Daisy, and Colonel Cressington made the mental decision that he was in luck, most decidedly, and engaged Miss May on the spot to share his phaeton to the picnic grounds, and his devotion for the day.

When her morning call was over, Colonel Cressington insisted on walking home with her, and Daisy permitted it—not because he was so handsome, and so entertaining, or she so pleased with him, but because—well, she felt a little provoked at hearing so many praises of the lady to whom Jack Maurice was engaged; and somehow, it made her feel better to flirt a little.

And as if the very Fates themselves were propitious, who should she and her gallant cavalier meet, face to face, for the first time in three years to Daisy, but Jack Maurice.

Jack Maurice—so perfectly splendid in his clear, dark, manly beauty, with his close-cut black hair, his bright, happy eyes, his—oh! his healthy, pretty, vivacious, that did not at the first emancipation from school books and short dresses, revel in the glorious anticipation of freedom, and the legitimate power of her charms and influence; and Daisy May, with her face as sweet as a flower, with its merry, dancing blue eyes, and hair that had red-gold tints among its long, lustrous, half-curling waves, with her complexion like cream-and-roses, and the prettiest, most witching mouth, and pearly teeth, and dimpled chin in the world, this merry, dainty girl, fresh from "Madame St. Santalle's Pensionnat de Demoiselles" in New York, was no exception to the rule that has governed, and will govern so many girls.

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face, and inhaling their sweet fragrance so like her soft, pure breath, Aunt Mary came in, in big, portly, jolly Aunt Mary, than whom Daisy had never known another mother.

"At your flowers again? I declare, Daisy, country birth will out, won't it? I expect before long you'll be marrying some of these good-looking young farmers around here, and settling down as demure as if you never had been a mile away."

Aunt Mary sat down in the capacious cretonne-covered rocking chair and fanned herself with her sunbonnet, and Daisy looked up laughingly, as she disposed of the last blossom to her satisfaction, a creamy, yellow rosebud, against a vivid glowing crimson hyacinth. There was a naughty little gleam in her eyes, and quite an arching of her round white neck accompanied her answer.

"Indeed I'll never marry a farmer, auntie. I love the country well enough—here at home, where nothing but the poetry of it falls to me—gathering flowers, drinking creamy milk, hunting eggs when I feel like it, sketching shady spots, driving whenever I want to, and always sent luscious things to eat—and in winter sleigh rides, and singing schools, and plenty of books and my music."

"And Jack Maurice," Aunt Mary tacked the name very tersely at the end of the long list of attractions, then watched to see the effect on Daisy's face.

The pretty lips pouted charmingly.

"Jack Maurice! Oh, Jack's good enough, of course, but—"

Aunt Mary tacked leisurely.

"It's a good thing you have got over your childish attachment to him, Daisy, for he's going to be married soon. Engaged to one of the prettiest girls you ever saw—a Miss Winchester, visiting from Philadelphia, at Judge Castle-dean's."

Daisy's eyes grew a little darker, and then she elevated her eyebrows coldly.

"He is engaged, is he? Oh, well, that's perfectly natural, I am sure. I suppose Miss—Miss Winchester did you say?—I suppose she's a decided blonde, and petite?" Daisy didn't say that Jack Maurice had often sworn there was no other style of beauty for him but Daisy's own.

"Ah, bless you, no. Miss Winchester is tall—almost as tall as Jack, and very stately, and a lovely brunette. Everybody thinks Jack's a lucky fellow."

Daisy arose and took down her garden hat.

## AU REVOIR.

BY HENRI MONTCALEM.

"Twas but a word, one little word,  
My lips had said, her ears had heard,  
One little word whose angry sense  
Had made such sudden difference;  
And all at once we silent grew,  
While with swift motion she withdrew  
Her little hand from my own;  
And then, the green lane turning down,  
We slowly went with beating heart  
Walking together, yet apart.

We reached the farmyard gate at last,  
I held it open while she passed;  
Then, as she turned, I bent my head  
Above her hand, and hoarsely said:  
"Since all is o'er between us two  
It but remains to say *Adieu!*"

I waited—ah! would she not say  
One word to me? I turned away.  
Then softly low she spoke once more:  
"Nay, not *Adieu*, but—*Au revoir!*"

Under the Surface:  
OR,  
Murder Will Out.

A STORY OF PHILADELPHIA.

BY WM. MASON TURNER, M. D.

AUTHOR OF "UNDER BAIL," "MABEL VANE,"  
ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XII.

ROMANCE AND REALITY.

On the night following the ball Clinton Craig stood on the brown-stone steps of old Charles Clayton's fine mansion on Walnut street, opposite Rittenhouse square.

The wind was sweeping by, rude and bustling; but the young gentleman had not long to wait. The door was soon opened.

"Is Miss Clayton in?" he asked of the servant-girl who had answered his summons.

"Yes, sir," was the reply, hesitatingly given. "But she is indisposed and desires to see no one."

"This is a disappointment, indeed!" muttered the young man, the chagrin he felt showing upon his face. "Is the young lady sick?"

"Not sick, exactly, sir, but quite fatigued. She did not reach home from the Academy ball until three o'clock this morning."

"Ah! yes," muttered Clinton.

The young man was still reluctant to go. He had had a pretty good rest, and, besides, he was burning with anxiety to see his in-laws.

"I do not like to intrude," he said, apologetically. "but will you kindly take my card to Miss Clayton, and say to her that I crave only a few moments of her time?"

The domestic bowed respectfully, and taking the card entered the house. She left the visitor in the vestibule. She had been gone only a moment when she returned.

"Walk in, sir," she said. "Miss Clayton bids me say that she will be delighted to see you."

A joyous, almost heavenly thrill flashed through Clinton Craig's bosom as he quickly entered the warm hall, and then walked into the dimly lit elegant parlor.

"Glorious! glorious!" he murmured, as he strode up and down the luxurious apartment, in a very exhilaration of feeling. "Why am I thus destined to so much happiness? To possess the love of such a noble, resplendent being, to be allowed to bask in the sunshine of her smiles, to dare call her mine is bliss—may, the very intoxication of bliss! But," he paused, and his brow slightly wrinkled, "would Minerva love me if I were not heir to a large fortune? What strange words she used at the Academy last night, when speaking of Algernon Floyd. And how coolly she danced with that fellow! 'Sh! nonsense; I am not jealous—at least of such as Algernon Floyd. And yet, I had forgotten!'"

As he spoke a dark shade passed over his face.

"Yes, confound it!" he resumed, in an uneasy tone. "I forgot entirely the fellow's impudent demand upon me! Can I satisfy him? Can I meet this man? Shall I expose my life to his bullet, when happiness is within my very grasp? Can I refuse him, as a gentleman? Ye gods!" and he gripped his hands fiercely. "—ha—"

Do what he could the young man could not drive away the ominous frown from his brow as Minerva Clayton, all luxuriousness, all loveliness, all frankness and confidence, swept into the parlor.

But in the half-gloom reigning there the queenly girl noticed not the perturbed look resting on her lover's face.

"Delighted to see you, Clinton!" she exclaimed, cordially, holding out her warm, plump hand. "I have been thinking of you, darling, all the afternoon."

Clinton Craig trembled with a delicious excitement. He led her softly to a sofa, and seating himself near her clasped her hand in his and murmured, in a low, ardent voice:

"And did you wish to see me did you long for me to come, dearest one?"

"Can you ask such a question, Clinton?" she replied, running her jeweled fingers lightly through the young man's clustering locks.

A conversation ensued which only lovers can hypothesize and appreciate.

As all of our readers may not confess to the "soft impeachment," as many, perhaps, have gone through this "foolishness" (?), we will omit the honeyed words that passed between the two young folks.

Minutes and hours sped by. At last, the young man looked up. His eyes were glittering with excitement, his face was flushed, and his heart throbbed with an exultant joy that he did not care to conceal.

"And when shall the happy day be, darling?" he murmured. "Speak, Minerva; I await your answer."

The girl turned her head away as a blush mantled her fair cheek; but in an instant she bent her gaze frankly on the young man's face and said:

"Whenever you may decide, Clinton. I am yours even now, and ready to obey you."

"Heaven bless you, Minerva! I'll never profane your love. Now what say you to one week from to-night?"

Again Minerva turned her head away; but as before it was only for a moment.

She faced him again; but she did not lift her head as she replied:

"This soon, very soon, Clinton; and papa? You know he must be consulted; but I'm satisfied that he will not object. Say two weeks from to-night, and my hand shall be yours, as my heart already is."

"It shall be as you wish, darling; and—"

Just then the bell rung, and Minerva, "Who can it be?" murmured Minerva.

"This very late," she glanced at the clock.

Then a rap sounded on the parlor-door, and a servant entered the room with a letter in her hand.

"A man brought this for you, Mr. Craig," she said. "He wishes you to attend to its contents at once."

With some misgiving, Clinton took the letter, and, excusing himself to Minerva, drew near the hall gaslight which was burning brightly.

Tearing open the envelope, he hurriedly read the letter through. Before he had perused a dozen words his brow contracted and his cheeks reddened. When he had finished he crushed the sheet rudely into his pocket and re-entered the parlor.

"I must go, Minerva," he said, hurriedly. "Yet, it is certainly time that I should," he continued, with an attempt at a smile as he glanced toward the handsome clock. "Truth is, I am wanted at home."

"Who wants you, Clinton?" asked the girl, eying him keenly, for she had noted his every movement since the reception of the letter; and she had marked with some foreboding his, evidently, perturbed manner.

"Why," hesitatingly, "Dr. Ashe, darling. He wishes to see me on some business of importance, he says."

"I don't like Dr. Ashe!" said the girl, bluntly.

"You do not know him well enough, Minerva; he is a fine fellow, though somewhat whimsical. I dare say his business is to sit up with me until two o'clock in the morning and smoke my cigars."

"If that is all, Clinton, send him word that you are engaged, and that you will see him to-morrow," suggested the young lady.

Young Craig colored.

"No, Minerva," he answered, "I must go. Fred means business, or he would not have sent for me at this hour. I must say good-night, darling."

He leaned over her and pressed a warm, passionate kiss upon the willing lips that were held up to his.

"Was ever man so accursed!" he muttered to himself a few moments afterward, as he was hurrying along the cold, wind-blown street.

But he did not go toward the office of Dr. Ashe. He crossed Broad street, and, reaching Spruce, hastened on. Fifteen minutes afterward he entered his adopted father's residence, just as the bell on Independence Hall pealed out the hour of midnight.

## CHAPTER XIII.

ABROAD ON THE RIVER.

ABOUT four o'clock in the afternoon of this same day the figure of a tall man suddenly emerged from the shadow of Girard avenue bridge and stood for a moment in the sunshine. He glanced hastily around him and peered up, guardedly, at the embankment and the bridge.

No one was in sight; a rumbling country-wagon jolting along the frozen road had just passed over the river. The wind was blowing too raw and bitter this cold December afternoon for pleasure-seekers to be abroad. However inviting and enticing the scenery when the "warm south" was sweeping over the land it was far different now when grim winter held his court, sent forth his blinding snows and trooping winds, and froze the running rills and babbling brooks.

The man cautiously climbed the rugged hill by the bridge. Then he paused and peered once again around him. Still no one was in sight. Hastily descending to his former position, he approached the edge of the stream, and drew a coil of cord from his pocket. To the end of the line was attached a heavy leaden weight. Glancing about him for the last time, he swung the weighted cord over his head and cast it out into the dark current.

"Not deep enough!" he muttered, in a vexed tone, as he drew in the line. "Yet this must and shall be the place; for *it suits!* I'll try again."

Whirling the lead once more around his head he let fly.

The line spun far out, and the weight fell with a peculiar *gluck* into the water.

Still he shook his head as for the third time he cast the line, and marked the depth of the water on the soggy cord. At last he succeeded in throwing the lead nearly to the first pier, the line running rapidly through his hands until the bottom was reached. He had found deep water.

A grin of satisfaction spread over the man's face, as, noting the spot with his eye, by the distance from the shore, from the pier, and by a particular line with the bridge above, he slowly coiled in the cord.

"I've found the place!" he ejaculated, hauling in the slack. "It will do. But, by Jove! so soon!" he muttered, in an anxious tone, as, drawing the string through his fingers, half-formed ice fell at his feet. "The river is freezing! It will be frozen hard before day. Will that be good or bad for me? But I must hurry; we must meet him. The sun will soon be down, and—yes; it will be almost dark by five o'clock. Glorious!" he continued, in an excited voice, as turning away from the river he hurried on toward the old house—Bloody Moll's—which he had before mentioned. "I've stern work on hand to-night; ay! and go has—my friend!"

In ten minutes, having crept successfully around the jutting cliff—no mean feat—he cautiously drew near the house. The door was shut, and, with one exception, the windows were closed. But the fellow rapped boldly. No response. Again he knocked. Again, no response. The man cast an anxious gaze toward the fast setting sun.

A coarse face, one evidently disguised with daubs of paint and false beard, was that upon which the slanting sunbeams fell. It was a face, however, keenly alive to passing events, as the roving black eyes, flashing around, indicated.

With a muttered curse, he kicked the door heavily. In answer to this imperative summons the bolt suddenly turned and Mother Moll peered out.

"Ah!" she muttered, in a low, satisfied tone. "So it is you, my dear—"

"Sh! sh! Moll; no names! I am on business; and—why, of course, you don't know me, never laid eyes on me before—eh?"

"Of course, my friend; you and your business are safe with me. Come in; the wind is cold and piercing."

The man hesitated.

"No, Moll," he answered. "Time is precious; I've none of it to spare. But have you any company?"

"No. I have had but one visitor to-day. He has gone out for *prop*—Black Ben."

As she spoke she eyed the fellow closely.

"That person visibly started; but quickly recovering himself he said:

"Black Ben is not to be trusted, Moll; he is given to tricks and treachery."

"Ah! Strange! He says the same of others!" was the woman's reply. "But," she continued, as if getting impatient and anxious to terminate this conference in the cold air, "how can I serve you?"

"I want the skiff, Moll."

"The skiff? Why the river is freezing now, and—"

"Confound the freezing!" interrupted the man, rudely. "Did I say anything about that? I want the skiff; I'll pay well for it, and in advance. But, *hark ye, Moll, I have not been here to-day, and I did not borrow the skiff, eh?*"

"Exactly. You shall have the skiff. But what's the game?"

"Canals are still about; you are forgetful, Moll!"

"Precious few there are, my friend," was the woman's quick reply. "Yes; and they are well housed. But the skiff is yours—three dollars in advance, the price," she hastened to say in a business-like way.

"Good! here are six dollars, Moll," answered the man, promptly, as he felt in his pocket and handed out the money in silver quarters.

"You are liberal, my friend; you are flush," said Moll, suspiciously.

"I am that way occasionally; but the skiff, Moll; I am in a hurry. I tell you I am full of work to-night."

"Glad to hear it, and hope you'll be paid well. But, how many oars?"

The man hesitated for a moment. Then he answered:

"Two pairs, Moll, of course; for the current is strong, you know, and ice is already making."

"Do you wish the *shot*?" asked the woman, in a whisper.

"Shot! Nonsense, Moll. Nothing of that sort, old girl," and the speaker laughed grimly.

"Well, the skiff is under the shed. Two pairs of oars are in it."

"Good. I'll have everything back before daybreak, ice or no ice. Good night."

"Good night," and the woman closed the door and disappeared.

The man at once drew the light skiff from under the shed, and springing lightly in, shoved it off. The light craft soon felt the rushing current, and guided by the man who sat in the stern sheets, it shot rapidly down the stream.

As soon, however, as the old woman's house was hid behind the beetling rock, the man grasped an oar, and, using it as an oar, sent the boat, with a few vigorous strokes, driving ashore.

Under a overarching clump of dead bushes, he sprung out and, leaning around soon found and flung into the skiff a bag, tied around one end with a stout cord.

Once aboard again, the fellow shoved off, and taking the oars rowed rapidly down stream toward the dam.

## CHAPTER XIV.

CLINTON CRAIG'S COMPANY.

THE letter which had hastened Clinton Craig's departure from Minerva Clayton's presence, was quite brief, though urgent, and imperative in tone. It ran thus:

"DEAR C.

"I know where you are. I take the liberty to send John, and bid you herewith, to come home at once. Trouble is brewing, and you are wanted. I am in your room, and you have company waiting for you. Hang it! I have been here two hours! Don't be wasting the night in—*folly*, to say the least, when serious matters demand your attention. Come at once, and, from his unpleasant position, relieve,

Yours sincerely, FRED."

When Clinton reached home, and entered, he stood for a moment in the hall, as though he was undecided. The young fellow felt that some great trouble was impending, that some ominous cloud was stretching over the horizon, and casting a black, impenetrable shadow at his feet.

But banishing his dark thoughts, he threw aside his hat and overcoat, and ascending the stairs lightly—for the hour was late—he turned to the left and entered his room.

Fred Ashe was seated near the grate. He was quietly smoking a cigar, and gazing vacantly at the red coals. But a serious shade rested upon the doctor's face, and the expression of his eyes was anxious and foreboding. Was he thinking of Alice Ray, lost to him? Was he thinking of Alice Ray, probably lost to the world? Or, was he thinking of troubles in which his bosom friend was involved?

But as Clinton entered the room, Fred turned to a man who sat near the table, and said:

"I am happy to inform you, sir, that this is Mr. Craig."

The man arose and bowing half-respectfully, half-carelessly, said in a tone that was quite steady and composed:

"Excuse me for presuming to await your coming, sir. Time was an object with me, and I could not postpone the occasion of my visit; an unpleasant one, sir, but one which I have not hesitated to perform. I have the honor to hand you this communication."

He held out an unsealed envelope to the young man.

"Be seated, sir, and excuse me a moment," said young Craig, politely, at the same time receiving and opening the missive. He read it through carefully. Then, without moving his head, he glanced over the top of the sheet at the man who had brought it. His scrutiny was but momentary.

The man was a short, heavily-built fellow. True enough he was clad as a gentleman; but he did not bear about him the breeding of one.

"I suppose, sir, you are acquainted with the contents of this letter, and of this communication?" asked Clinton, glancing again at his strange company.

"I am," was the prompt reply. "I now await your answer, sir."

This was business-like and to the point.

"Can you oblige me by returning to-morrow when I will be better prepared to reply to this note? I need a few hours to deliberate on the matter."

"I was under the impression, sir, that you had been informed of this expected call. If I mistake not, such was the information I received from my friend."

The man spoke very coolly.

Clinton Craig winced; and his cheeks slightly reddened. In his mad joy, and his love-blindness for Minerva Clayton, the young man had, indeed, forgotten almost everything. He certainly had forgotten his note that morning requesting his friend, Fred Ashe, to call in the evening.

But he aroused himself and asked:

"Are you aware, sir, of the relations existing between Algernon Floyd and myself?"

"If rumor speaks truly, I am aware, sir, that no real relationship exists between you—Mr. Floyd, and he made a spiteful emphasis, blood-nephew to your adopted father. Certainly that relationship should not be a bar to a meeting between gentlemen."

Again young Craig's face flushed; and this time he bit his lip angrily.

"There is no relationship, sir, which can make one backward in such a matter as this," he answered, tartly. "Excuse me while I have five minutes' private conversation with my friend here."

"Certainly," and the man turned coolly to a book of photographs, while Clinton, beckoning Dr. Ashe to follow him, withdrew to an adjoining room.

"A confounded bad matter, Fred, and what am I to do?" exclaimed the young man, as soon

as they were out of earshot. "Ay! and all this right under my adopted father's nose!"

"Don't disturb yourself about that, Clinton," returned the doctor. "Mr. Floyd is absent from home to-night."

"Absent? And where is he?" asked the young man, in surprise.

"When I came here this evening, old Barton told me that your father had been suddenly summoned to Manayunk. I believe one of the mills had stopped, and the foreman wanted the old gentleman to come out and look at it. He will return to-morrow—or, rather to-day; for 'tis now half-past twelve o'clock."

"A raw night for the good old man; and he so delicate and frail. But Fred, this business with Algernon Floyd is a troublesome matter. Yesterday morning I would have welcomed such a message from him; but now, and he sighed, 'it gives me annoyance.'"

"Exactly; I suppose it's on account of your relations to Minerva Clayton? Do not be offended at my frankness, Clinton; I am your friend."

"I am not offended, Fred; and it is on Minerva's account that I am disinclined to meet this fellow. We are engaged, Fred; we will be married two weeks from to-night."

The young physician started back.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "Then, my friend, it is, indeed, too late to warn you of that woman—of Minerva Clayton?"

"Warn me, Fred! Speak not of Miss Clayton in such terms; she is my affianced."

Fred Ashe made no reply; he simply bowed his head and kept his eyes fastened upon the floor. Suddenly, however, he looked up and said, decidedly:

"Whatever may be your relations and your engagements, Clinton, you are still classed among gentlemen; as such you are accountable. I know the contents of that note, the fellow who brought it took commendable pains to enlighten me on the subject. Moreover, he volunteered this statement, that in case you rejected the invitation to mortal combat, Algernon Floyd would post you in the clubs as a puppy and a coward, and would seek a street encounter with you."

"The contemptible scoundrel!" and Clinton Craig's eyes flashed venomously. "This determines me, Fred! I'll meet the fellow, and my aim shall not fail me!"

"Truth is, Clinton, you could not do otherwise—I wish that you could," said the physician. "But, appreciating the position in which I already feared that you were placed, I offered this fellow myself as your substitute either in a rencontre with him or with his principal."

"Noble Fred! But you shall run no such risk for me. Come what may, I will give Algernon Floyd satisfaction."

So saying, accompanied by his friend, he re-entered the room wherein he had left the bearer of the challenge.

I accept this letter—the invitation which it contains, sir," he said, quietly, "and I refer you to my friend here, Dr. Ashe."

"Thanks for your promptness, sir. I suppose, doctor," turning to the young physician, "as time is precious, and as I think it is the desire of all parties to have this affair settled as soon as possible, we might as well make our brief arrangements here?"

"At your service," responded the doctor, coldly, and not even consulting Clinton.

The two drew their chairs close together and at once entered into a low conversation. Young Craig stood all the time at the further side of the room, his head bowed upon his bosom.

The conference between the seconds lasted for some time. At length they arose.

"Thank you, doctor; it is arranged to my entire satisfaction. And may I ask," he continued, "that, in view of the fact that we wish the matter to be as quiet as possible, you will extend surgical aid in case my friend is wounded?"

"In that event I am, most assuredly, at his service," was the ready reply.

"Thanks, sir; and I have the honor to bid you good-night, gentlemen."

He bowed and left the room. Dr. Ashe accompanied him to the street-door, and returned in a few moments.

"You must go to bed, Clinton—and to sleep, too," he said, positively. "You need rest; for your hand must be steady in the morning."

The physician spoke gravely.

"In the morning! Ha! so soon?"

"Yes; and the sooner the better; but come, Clinton; under such circumstances as this, it is both customary and necessary to make arrangements of one's affairs—in case—why, of accident, you know. You meet to-morrow morning at half-past eight o'clock; the place, back of Lemon Hill; the weapons, dueling-pistols; the distance, ten paces."

A conference, lasting an hour, took place between the two friends. When it ended Clinton Craig, sad and gloomy, arose and said, with deep emotion:

"Heaven bless you, Fred! and heaven stand by me in this encounter—for Minerva's sake!" and he went from the room.

Dr. Ashe remained with his friend that night.

Early next morning, as the sun was rising over the cold, clear-rimmed horizon, a couple of carriages drew up from different directions on Girard avenue—at that time almost a country road—to the rear of Lemon Hill. The exact spot was where at that day stand the remains of the earth-breastwork thrown up during the recent civil war.

From each of these two carriages descended two gentlemen. They hastily took their way over the little hill, through the frozen snow, until they had reached a small level plateau. No time was lost with the preliminary arrangements; and after a little sharp wrangling between the seconds, in which Dr. Ashe carried his point, the principals took their places. They saluted coldly.

"Does the challenger insist on going on with this duel?" asked Dr. Ashe, after a moment's pause.

"He does!" was the prompt reply, from Algernon Floyd himself.

"So be it!"

Near his principal, he whispered:

"Be firm, my friend! and watch him!"

He strode on and withdrew to a safe distance.

The giving of the word, and the dropping of the handkerchief had fallen by lot to Floyd's second. Taking his place, the fellow said, in a low, but distinct voice:

"Are you ready, gentlemen?"

"Ready!" returned both of the men who stood, with the deadly weapons in hand, facing one another.

"Then fire at the word three. Again: are you ready?"

"Ready!" was the simultaneous response.

"Then: one—two—"

Before the word three was reached there came a flash, and a report.

One of the principals staggered backward and sunk into the pallid snow.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 338.)

## Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

## THE PROFESSIONAL ARENA.

NOTES OF THE DAY.—The *Hartford Times*, not long since, published a statement emanating from Bond of the Hartford Club team to the effect that Bond had openly charged Ferguson with selling games. Ferguson published a card in reply of course denying the charges and expressing his surprise at seeing such a paragraph in print. No one believed the charge who knew Ferguson, but it had a bad effect, which even the explicit denial—eating his own words, it may be said—which Bond has since published will not offset. Bond's card is as follows:

HARTFORD, CONN., Aug. 25th, 1876.

M. G. BULKELEY, Esq., Pres. H. B. B. Club.

In reply to your letter in regard to Captain Ferguson's play in recent games, I desire to say that whatever charges of "crooked" play or willfully losing games were made by me, were entirely unfounded, and made in a moment of excitement, and I cheerfully acknowledge the wrong I have done both to the club and its manager, and make this the only reparation in my power. THOMAS H. BOND.

The effect of the quarrel—for Bond and Ferguson do not speak—will be to mar the efficiency of the nine and to lose the Hartford Club the position in the pennant race they would otherwise have won.

There are now in the professional arena over twenty club teams outside of the League Association, these clubs being located West, East and North as follows: St. Louis, Indianapolis, Columbus, Wheeling, Allegheny City, Reading, Wilmington, Harrisburg, Elizabeth, New York, Brooklyn, Ilion, Ithaca, Syracuse, Binghamton, Bridgeport, New Haven, Providence, Fall River, Lowell and in London and Guelph, Canada. What the majority of

## THE VIOLINIST.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

He got himself an old dilapidated violin  
That held more noise than twenty men  
Could possibly take in.  
Twas full of everything save tunes—  
Of squeals and ghostly wails,  
Harmonious as a drove of pigs  
Stuck fast between the tails.  
He tuned it with a monkey wrench,  
And when the strings would snap  
He always put some new ones on—  
Indeed did this here chap.  
He'd groove the strings and soap the bow,  
Roll up his sleeves, and then—  
Torment that awful violin  
Like six or seven men!  
He'd roll his eyes aloft to heaven  
And draw his face all wrong,  
And all of that man's sentient soul  
Flashed into that fiddle strong.  
He mashed the little notes with the big,  
And how the little ones shrieked!  
The rests were very loud in tone  
And the very bars they screamed.  
The fiddle screamed both night and day,  
For it was tortured so;  
The sun by day the stars by night  
For pity ceased to go.  
The crashing of the elements,  
The people's shrieks that staid by night,  
All failed to have effect upon  
That demon of the bow.  
He never stopped to eat his meals,  
He never changed the tune;  
That fiddle's shrieks it swept the town  
Just like a wild simoon.  
The fire flew at every stroke  
Beneath that flying bow,  
And fire dashed from both his eyes,  
And set the room aglow.  
The tones like streaks of lightning shot  
Through all the firmament,  
And deaf folk wildly rushed about  
With desperate intent.  
So terrible did it become  
That people in despair  
Attempted to cut their ears—  
They had no business there!  
For seven weeks we stood it all,  
And then by popular vote  
We rose and that vile violin  
We chucked it down his throat.  
We hung him up; the jury said  
It was an awful fate,  
But that by strict chronology  
It was seven weeks too late.

Yankee Boys in Ceylon:  
OR,  
THE CRUISE OF THE FLYAWAY.BY C. D. CLARK,  
AUTHOR OF "IN THE WILDERNESS," "ROD  
AND RIFLE," "CAMP AND CANOE," ETC.

## IV.—THE COBRA AND SERPENT CHARMER.

The day's sport had been glorious, sufficient-ly seasoned with danger to make it interesting. The poor people of the vicinity looked upon the hunters as their benefactors, and agreed to preserve the heads of two of the largest boars to add to the collection which the boys were making. They went back to the village, minus one horse—Will boasting in his gay way of the manifest advantage of a high rock over a horse. "In the first place," he said, "a rock can't throw you out of the saddle, and a horse can. In the second, a wild boar may file his tusks against a rock until he gets tired of the sport, and the rock won't give in, but a horse is not near so tough. I have almost decided to discard horses in future."  
"All right," said Richard, as he plodded along on foot, and suiting action to word he pulled Will out of the saddle. "I'll ride this horse to the village. I rather like horses myself; and as you are so set against them you ought not to ride one."  
He bounded into the saddle and rode away, keeping out of the reach of the boy, who felt that the tables were turned upon him in a far from pleasant manner.  
"Oh, say, Dick," he shouted, "this is more than a joke."  
"Oh, no, Will; don't you fret, for I will ride to the village and tell them that you are on the way."  
And in spite of the protestations of that practical joker, Will, he kept the horse, and Will had to foot it to the village or take some other means of locomotion. Presently he was seen in conference with the head man, and at a rapid order given by the chief some of the coolies sprang into the thicket of bamboos, and Will sat down on a rock to wait for them. In a few moments these coolies joined the party on a trot, with a hastily-constructed bamboo frame upon their shoulders, upon which Will sat in stately pride with his arms folded on his bosom. He was bound to ride to the village after all.  
"What do you say to my team, Dick?" he shouted. "I've got a four-in-hand, you see. That is more than you can say for that bag of bones under you. He is a regular old skeleton, that horse, and I wouldn't change with you for any consideration."  
He stretched himself at full length upon the bamboos, and, spreading a handkerchief over his face, enjoyed the ride hugely. His weight was nothing to the coolies accustomed to carry great burdens for a long distance. They had gone nearly two miles, when a man was seen to cross the path in front, at a rapid pace.  
"Who is that, Pete?" demanded Sawyer.  
"Can it be Abenhua?"  
"It is!" replied Modo, in an excited tone.  
"Shall I call him?"  
"Yes; he will give the boys some sport. Besides, I would give anything if he would go with us to Kandy."  
Modo uttered a peculiar cry, at which the man halted and came toward them. He was a tall, gaunt, wiry fellow—a genuine Hindoo from the north, a man of gigantic strength, with a face so red that the boys were in sympathy with him at once.  
He wore a white calico tunic, open at the breast, leaving his massive bosom exposed. His sandals were dusty and torn, and the knotted handkerchief about his forehead was stained with blood. At his back he carried a small oblong box, and in one hand a kind of flute, rudely formed from a small joint of bamboo.  
"Abenhua!" cried Sawyer, bending in the saddle to salute him, "I am glad to see you again."  
"Abenhua has not looked on the face of the Captain Sahib, for seven years," replied the man, with a low bow. "What good wind has blown his ship again into the land of the Cingalese?"  
"I have come out with these young men to hunt the tiger and elephant. Will you go with us again?"  
"Abenhua promised that if the Captain Sahib came back he would again be his servant."  
"That is all right. Have you got any snakes now?"  
"Two," answered Abenhua.  
"This is the best snake-charmer in Ceylon," explained Sawyer, turning to the young men; "and as for juggling, he can do things that will make your hair stand on end. Show us the snakes, Abenhua."  
The man set the box upon the earth, and opening a small slide, thrust in his hand. There was a slight commotion in the box, and he with-

drew his hand, holding by the neck one of the largest of the venomous serpents of India as well as the most deadly—the cobra di capello, or hooded snake—a huge creature, over four feet long, its beautiful mottled body sparkling in the rays of the sun as it coiled about his wrist and arm. The expanded hood, marked with a figure in the shape of a pair of spectacles; the thick body, with its beautiful markings, and the scintillating eyes proved it to be of that dreaded family. Yet the snake-charmer did not appear to fear it in the least, allowing it to coil about his neck and arm, and holding the head close to his face, teasing it in every possible way. Yet the snake made no attempt to bite him, and they began to suspect that the fangs had been extracted.

"The young men think that the serpent has no fangs, Abenhua," said Sawyer.  
"So much do I think so that I will take the snake in my hand," said Richard, bending in the saddle to take the snake. The charmer moved away with a cry of alarm, and Sawyer caught the young man by the shoulders.  
"Abenhua never told a lie in his life," he said. "If he says that the serpent is dangerous, I, for one, require no other proof."  
"It is dangerous," replied the Hindoo. "Let a coolie bring me a bird."

One of the Cingalese, who carried on his shoulder a small pea-hen, which he had snatched from the snake-charmer and held out to the bird. Abenhua took it and held it before the serpent, thrusting it against his head and teasing him in every possible way, until the serpent threw back his head, revealing the long white fangs, and struck the fowl in the neck. Abenhua held the fowl for a moment, and then dropped it upon the earth. The bird made no attempt to escape, but remained seated upon the earth, uttering low, feeble cries of pain. Four minutes after she fell upon her side, fluttered a moment, and was dead.

"Do you doubt now?" asked Sawyer.  
"Would you like to handle the snake?"  
"Excuse me; I was a fool to doubt him, but I did not think that the man would dare to handle a really venomous snake so boldly."  
"See here," said Ned, speaking to the charmer. "If that snake should bite you, would you really die?"  
The man looked at him a moment in silence, and shook his head.  
"Why?"  
"Because I have the golden secret, known only to my race—the antidote for the venom of the cobra."

"Will you tell what it is?"  
"It is a secret, handed down through my tribe for many centuries."  
"And why not tell it for the common good of mankind?"  
"I only know one people, and that people my own," replied the man. "If a serpent should bite you I would cure you, but I would do no more."

Holding the cobra in one hand the charmer drew out another with his left hand, and there he stood, with those horrible creatures twining about him, a living symbol of power.

"That will do for the snakes, Abenhua. Now let us see some of your jugglery," said Sawyer. "But where is Rona? I don't see her anywhere."

Abenhua replaced the serpents in the box, and placing the flute to his lips began a low, soft, melodious strain. At the sound the bushes parted, and there came forth a beautiful girl, such a woman as the boys, unaccustomed to the East, had never seen. She was dressed in an Eastern costume, a rich tunic of satin, slashed with gold, and over this a blue jacket embroidered with silver braid. She wore Turkish trousers of yellow silk, and her feet were covered by dainty slippers, which could not conceal the beauty of her little feet. A scarf was wrapped about her head in the shape of a turban, fastened in front by a blazing jewel—a black diamond.

Her face was "brown but comely;" her features of the Oriental style, with great, brown, almond-shaped eyes and small, delicate mouth. Her hands were small, and loaded with rings of rare price. She approached with a free, careless step, and bent before Abenhua as before a master.  
"You have come at my call, Rona," he said. "These men from the West would witness our skill. Shall it be?"  
"I am ready, my father," she responded; "what you tell me that I will perform."  
He took two small bamboo cylinders from her hand, and planted them upon the earth. Then, lifting her in his arms as if she had not weighed a feather's weight, he placed her so that one elbow rested upon one of the bamboo tubes and her foot upon another. Then he passed from one to another, tapping upon them softly with a small stick, and to the wonder of the young men the cylinders began to increase in length, rising higher and higher, until they had literally carried the girl up to the height of fifteen feet from the earth. Then, striking one of the bamboos heavily, it began to recede, leaving Rona calmly reclining on her elbow, far above them. Then the bamboo began to revolve slowly, and the girl revolved with it, supported only by her elbow, upon the point of the bamboo. Then the charmer made another sign, and she came floating down from above, slowly as a bird sinks, and alighted upon the earth close beside them, while the bamboo fell to the earth, apparently no larger than it was before.

"Wonderful!" cried Will. "How do you explain that, now?"  
"I don't attempt to explain it," replied Sawyer. "The tricks which Abenhua does are only tricks, it is true, but I want to see any one else do them. Half the tricks which are performed by the 'jugglers' in America would be regarded as mere child's play by such men as Abenhua."

The charmer laughed, and raising his right hand he called to Rona to cut it off! She took a large and sharp knife, and, raising it above her head, the charmer extended his hand, she struck with all her force. The blood spurted from the severed wrist, and he held it up, the blood running like a fountain.

"He has hurt himself," cried Ned, leaping from the saddle. "Help him, Dick; try and stop the bleeding."  
Sawyer laughed as Rona caught at the severed hand, which lay upon the earth, replaced it on the bleeding wrist, and covered it with a white cloth. After holding it there a moment, she took away the cloth, and the charmer held up his hand, uninjured in any way.

"These are small things to do," said the Hindoo, bowing low before them. "If the Sahib wish I will cut off Rona's head before them and replace it again."  
"No, no!" said Sawyer, hurriedly. "I have seen you do that trick once, and it is altogether too real. We have seen enough for the present, but if you will follow us to the village, you shall go with us to the hunting-grounds of Kandy."  
"Rona must go, too. Where I go she must go also."

"Of course," answered Sawyer. "That is understood."

"Is she his daughter?" asked Richard, in a low tone.

"Yes," replied Sawyer. "Is she not beautiful? Search through all the world and you will not find a better or purer girl than Rona. You should hear her sing, and see her dance."

"We will see her dance when we get to the village."

"Not unless she is in the mood. Rona is modest and does not like to show off her accomplishment before the crowd."

"She is beautiful, but I am willing to allow," declared Richard. "Try your power upon the girl when we get to camp."

For some reason the rough sailor had a great influence over the beautiful Hindoo girl; and so, when the lights were blazing, Rona sang the wild melodies of her native land in the voice of one inspired, and danced an enchanting figure to the music of her father's flute. That night the younger lads went to their blankets raving about the beautiful girl, but Richard threw cold water on their rhapsodies.

"If she cares for any man it is for rough Dave Sawyer. But, be that as it may, she is a good and beautiful girl, and her father is a great addition to our party. You must be careful not to do anything to drive him away."

The boys promised, and went to sleep to dream of dark-eyed beauties, dancing to ravishing measures, and only awakened when the sun-rays, streaming in their faces, warned them that it was time to be on the road.

## Two Men.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

"ONE, two, three!"

Two men with the deadliest earnestness of the duello in their leveled glances, with pistols raised and grim mouths set, responded to the word. There was a simultaneous snap and a dull flash in the pan; but weapons had failed to go off.

One of the contestants flung his to the ground with a muttered imprecation; the other turned to his second, coolly.

"We must trouble you to reload, Darley," Darley hesitated. "I wish," he said impetuously, "you could find an explanation possible. Don't let this thing go on, Crode."

"This thing will go on," said Crode. "I thought I had convinced you of the impossibility of any reconciliation."

"Oh, well," responded Darley with a shrug, stooping to recover the discarded weapon of the other. "This gentleman had walked impatiently to a little distance and stood leaning against a tree, from whence he watched with frowning brows the process of priming the slender Spanish pistols that were not apt to play such freaks of failure."

The two men were in position again, the slow, impressive tone of the second repeated the "one, two, three," like a death-knell, both principals wheeled face to face with fingers pressing the trigger, and—again there was the same result.

This time a white gleam went over the face of Crode. He turned upon Darley.  
"Have you connived at this?" he demanded fiercely.

"Not I, upon my word. Hang it, Crode," aggrievedly, "have I ever shown myself the fellow to go back on a friend in any fix? It's a pity that you and Tresser are so persistently intent upon blowing each other's brains out, but since you won't listen to reason I'm sorry that the opportunity is such a perverse one. Blame fate, this detestable morning, anything you like, but not me."

There was enough sincere annoyance in his tone to convince Crode. There was a hasty consultation between the two seconds.

"Satan himself couldn't insure everything to be correct in this rain. It's no fault of yours, but that powder must be damp, Darley. It's hardly dignified for two sworn foes to try at each other with weapons less effective than a schoolboy's pop-gun, and I speak for Mr. Tresser in asking that the meeting be deferred until surer measures can be taken. He is as anxious as you possibly can be to put a decisive ending to their difference."

Under the circumstances no objection could be made. Crode gave his assent. His opponent received it as coldly, and walked away toward the dim sea-line, where tawny-crested waves rolled "mountain high" and broke with a thunderous sound upon the rocky shore. There was an easterly wind and a sharp rain, that on the previous night had been at a wildly tempestuous height. Then the clouds had glimmered constantly with dazzling, forked lightning flashes, and the war of the ocean was as if it meant to break its bonds and burst in a second deluge upon the land. "God help all at sea," was a prayer on many lips, and while scores watched the wild, black night with awe and trembling, Tresser and Crode, once fast friends and companions, met; the "bitter blood" which had separated them was in the ascendant still, and this morning's fruitless encounter was the result.

With the morning light, a ship, dismantled, was seen drifting helplessly outside the little bay. An hour later she struck upon the point of rocks which made the channel dangerous, where she still remained straining with every wash of the sea, liable to go to pieces at any moment. Tresser walked past the excited groups gathered upon the beach, men with coils of rope at their feet and the end about their waists ready to dare the waters in the effort to save any helpless beings who might near the shore. Some, by calling and making signs, were trying to induce the imperiled creatures to trust themselves to the waters, but either the distance was too great for them to be understood, or the danger seemed too imminent to be risked while the wreck still held together.

While Tresser watched, the strained timbers gave way with a crash, which was heard faintly above the storm; there was a tumultuous upheaval of the foaming billows, then spots that were known to be human forms were seen clinging to the black, slippery rocks, and disappearing from them, washed, some few within the reach of saving hands, by far the most to swift destruction.

"This may settle our question as effectually as powder and ball," said Crode's coldly even voice beside him, while his glance went over the boiling surf. "I give you credit for not flinching before the one. Will you dare this?"  
"I would have dared it without your challenge."

Crode was gone however without waiting for that answer. He had caught sight of a dark object through the driving mist, and leaping out waist deep, was borne seaward by a receding wave.

It was but a few seconds' work for Tresser to throw off coat and boots and follow, though it seemed to him that some sort of incubus was upon him preventing haste, and then the two bitter enemies were swimming nearly abreast, buffeted back by the same huge waves, having the same object in view and threatened by the

same fate. Better the last, surely, than hands deliberately reddened with revenge-spilled blood.

How had such a pass been reached? You have the story.

A pair of hazel eyes, a pale brunette face, a sweet, red, scornful mouth, dewy and tremulous, a true seal to the wavering character of the girl, though no one suspected her then of indecision. Miss Mona Sargray, at your service, with a pleasant sense of being sure of her own power, and an uneasy sensation of not being sure of herself.

She leaned over the railing of the veranda, pulling a scarlet geranium to shreds while she talked gayly to Tresser, who was holding the bit which his black steed was champing impatiently.

"How can I say what I think of your new purchase, Mr. Tresser, when I exhausted all my adjectives of admiration over the last. Do they match?"

"Is it to make me doubt your appreciation of horseflesh that you ask? No, Miss Sargray, they do not match in any respect save color. This fellow," laying his hand caressingly on the glossy mane, "is light enough for a lady's horse, gentle, and swift as the wind. At least, that is the character I had with him. Will you show that you think well of my choice by mounting him this morning, and please me?"

The last *sotto voce*, with a glance of appeal straight into her eyes.

"I would advise you not to think well enough of the invitation to accept it, unless Tresser agrees to put a stronger curb upon the creature." This from Crode, lounging upon a bench apparently between sleeping and waking, in reality counting the flowers of the scarlet cluster she was stewing to the winds.

"Oh, you are an advocate of the curbing system," she said, just flashing him a glance. "For my part, I never could approve a tame spirit, be it in man or beast."

"Then you will go?" asked Tresser, eagerly.

"One, two, three, four, five," counted Crode, "and there are two left. Which one do you intend to discard, Miss Sargray?"

The white hand left the geraniums and a glow like a reflection from them mantled her cheek.

"What does it mean?" curiously from Tresser. "Are you settling the question to ride or not to ride by means of the flowers, Miss Sargray? Which is it?"

The two scarlet heads came off together, and Miss Sargray turned to him smiling graciously. "I will go with very great pleasure, Mr. Tresser."

Leaving the veranda to proceed leisurely to her room, the image of Crode before her at the foot of the stairway startled Miss Sargray.

"If I offer a curb to your inclinations it is because you force me to do so," he said, putting out a hand to detain her. "To my knowledge you have rejected five chances; must mine be numbered among those lost? One moment, Miss Sargray. If you ride with Tresser, unless as already pledged to me, I shall take that as the seal to my sentence."

The spirit of coquetry which had carried her triumphant through many similar scenes, refused to rally in the face of the grim import which underlaid his quiet. She did not resent his compelling will as many a woman might; it took the decision out of her hands in a manner, and for that she was grateful.

She had ceased to be so by the time she saw Tresser again, for two of the equestrian party made up for that day failed to join it; and the next Tresser had left the place and Crode was recognized as master of the situation.

There was an evening gathering, an informal farewell party given by Mrs. Van Weiss to her closest friends. By no means a small affair. The good-natured, kind-hearted German lady would leave hosts of well-wishers behind her, and not one who would regret her more sincerely than the girl who had been her companion for the two years of her residence in America, Mona Sargray. It was due to Mrs. Van Weiss that the young lady's career in the higher circles had not been out short abruptly some eighteen months before, when the wheel of fortune turned for her as it did about that time for many of the high and favored of our land. Mrs. Sargray with a competent friend, and Mona Sargray penniless, thanks to her generous friend, had run an equally brilliant career which would end brilliantly, by the *on dit*, in her alliance to Crode about the time Mrs. Van Weiss would be steaming out of the bay, homeward bound. The German had an unfeminine horror of weddings, which accounted for this one not taking place before her departure, while Mona's friendless condition accounted for the speed with which it would follow.

There was a broad streak of romance in the nature of good Mrs. Van Weiss, and a long moonlit hall was given up to youthful promenade. Miss Sargray was led into it by her partner of the waltz, and presently left in a screened nook with the ivory light sifting through lace curtains upon her pretty head. A voice spoke her name, and she looked up just a shade startled into Tresser's haggard eyes. She had not known he was there, and the change in him gave her a shock.

"Will Logan be back?" he asked, unceremoniously.

"Mr. Tresser! You were the very furthest person from my thoughts. No, Mr. Logan will not be back. He was glad of the dismissal which I was glad to give him, attracted by a pretty face not a hundred miles off, I suspect."

He took the seat beside her, uncollected.

"It is nothing new to find myself the furthest person from your thoughts," he said, bitterly. "Is rumor correct in naming the nearest one?"  
"If you refer to Mr. Crode, rumor is eminently correct." Contradicting that calm tone had come a quick change of the sensitive countenance like enlightenment to the man beside her.

"Then heaven pity him more than me. He has the greater need."  
"Mr. Tresser?"  
"I mean it. You have no right to take the love he offers you and give him none in return. You might at least have retained the merit of truthfulness and shown him the precipice he stands on. If I was given my free choice to-night, loving you madly as I have done and do, I would choose my own place rather than his. Rather my misery than the disillusion which must come to him some day. In his place and understanding you, I should never rest for fear love should come to you too late."

She had not attempted to stem the torrent of his passionate utterance, and there was no opportunity given her to answer him, but his words sunk into her memory nevertheless. Crode's keen eyes had spied out the pair, and were lit with a jealous gleam as he approached them.

He executed that same jealousy when his bridal morning came, and was ready to smile at the phantoms of doubt his mind had held in the past. Phantoms that would be exorcised

forever once he should claim his bride. He had fought his own exacting disposition, and as an evidence of having conquered it had asked Tresser at the eleventh hour to stand as one of his ushers at the quiet wedding.

They were in the vestibule of the church waiting for the bride's party to arrive when a messenger slipped a note into Tresser's hand. "I have seen my mistake," it read, "and dare to obey the truest impulse of my life. I can only guess yet how much I may owe you for opening my eyes to the truth. I go with Mrs. Van Weiss. Break it to Mr. Crode, and tell him the wrong I might have done him—deeper by far than this disappointment can be. If he does not thank me sometime he will not have cause to curse."

"MONA SARGRAY."  
While Tresser held the open page, doubtful how to act, Crode confronted him with lowering brow. He had recognized the writing and demanded to see the note. Tresser gave it to him with a few hurried words of explanation which the other did not heed.

Crode never lost his outward calmness, but the blaze of white fury was under it as he turned upon his former friend.

"I know to whom I am indebted for this, and you may trust me to pay the debt," he said. "By your own admission as well as her statement you have parted us, and if you are not a coward as well as a traitor you will be responsible for the act."

"I will hold myself responsible for anything I have done," avowed Tresser, stung by the other's words and tone.

Others came between, preventing further disturbance then and there, and it was due to the interference of friends that they were kept apart, in the hope that time would heal the hurt of the one, the pride and resentment of the other. It seemed to have done so, until they met by the merest accident that stormy night in the seaside village, and the antagonism which had smoldered from that date broke forth anew.

Among the brave men who struggled to preserve those imperiled lives, none were more reckless in their bravery than Crode and Tresser—Crode foremost, as became his firmer will and impassioned zeal. He was grappling with a dusky weight for the third time, his eyes filled with the salt spray, and a vague, distant, sounding roar which had itself distinct from the boom of the waves filling his ears. He felt his burden slipping from him, himself sinking, and sudden horror overwhelmed him. He made a desperate effort to recover himself, then was conscious that the undertow was drawing him in, and knew no more beyond a dim, desperate struggle with ingulfing waters until he found himself, dizzy and faint, on the wet sands, rough but kind hands unlocking the clasp of his rigid ones from that object to which he had clung through all, and a cheer, which at first he did not understand, going up around him.

"Brave fellows!" in Darley's familiar voice. "Hard to tell which of the lot, rescued, or rescuers, are nearest gone though. Tresser brought up the other three locked together as you see them. A grand feat, upon my word and honor. Tresser, my dear sir, you have done enough for one man in conscience name."

Tresser looked white enough to faint, but rallied and asked:

"Was it worth doing? Are they alive?"  
Crode, knowing what other debt he owed to this man then, wondered at the chance which had made him save the life that day which he might take upon the morrow.

Somebody stooping over the two bodies which had been swept from the wreck rose now.

"It looks like death," he said, softly, "and I'll warrant none of you ever saw it come in a prettier shape."

All turned to the sight, a man and a woman locked close in each other's arms. A handsome man's face with blonde beard and fair hair clinging about the temples, and the tender expression which a smile had left about the lips, but the woman's face wore a look which in life must have transfigured it. It could be seen that the pair had met their fate without fear, with a kind of solemn joy that where death was inevitable they might die together.

"Husband and wife," said some one, indicating the little hand on which the wedding circlet gleamed.

"Good God!" cried Crode, quite under his breath. "Mona!" Then looking beyond, his eyes and Tresser's met. The latter came around the little group who were taking up the bodies reverently.

"We could not imagine her wearing that look for either of us," he said, with strong agitation shaking his voice. "Crode, I have not the heart to remember what I once thought were my grievances—I was foolish enough to do so, but she might have loved me but for you—or to hold anger now. Can't we bury the past and begin better lives?"

"I did you a wrong. Forgive me," said Crode, giving his hand, but wearing the look of a man who was stunned.

Was he thinking of the Providence which guides these things, and contrasting their evil passions with the thoughts of those two on the brink of the hereafter—inspired then with a trust and peace which had left its seal?

However that may have been, the difference between those two men who had loved one woman all too well, is the difference between a man who may marry, and all but forget this episode of his life, but Crode never will.

## Ripples.

A THIEF in Evansville, Indiana, stole the contribution box out of a church. He evidently went there to prey.

A wag, noted for his brevity, writes to a friend to be careful in the selection of his diet. He says: "Don't eat Q-cumbers; they'll W-up."

Charles Lamb, when speaking of one of his rides on horseback, remarked that "all at once his horse stopped, but he kept right on."

The nation that produces most marriages is fascination. And perhaps the nation that produces the most divorces is alienation.

"Madam," said a gentleman to his wife, "let me tell you facts are very stubborn things." "What a fact you must be," quoth the lady.

"I shall follow her soon," said a sad-eyed man at the grave of his wife. Within a month he was following another woman.

The Oswego Palladium mentions James Clark and wife, who "were born, died, and were buried on the same day." Jimmy and his wife must have been awfully young.

It was rather personal in a California newspaper man to chronicle the purchase of a mule by a brother editor as "a remarkable instance of self-possession."

There is always one particularly active and noisy fly these mornings that makes it his business to call a fellow up for his breakfast—the fly's breakfast we mean.